NOVEMBER 19, 2018

TIME

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THE FIGHT IS ABOUT TO GET EVEN WORSE

by MOLLY BALL

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Voters queue in the rain to cast ballots at a public school in Manhattan on Nov. 6, part of a surge in turnout across the nation for the midterm elections

Photograph by Craig Ruttle—AP/Shutterstock

ON THE COVER: *Illustration by Edel Rodriguez for TIME*

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WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT ...

BEYOND HATE After fatal shootings at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life synagogue and a Kentucky supermarket, readers praised Edel Rodriguez's Nov. 12 cover illustration of America's own tree of life. "Accurate, poetic and hopeful," tweeted @debbiehupp. Jon Meacham's piece on the link between hate in America and President Trump sparked talk too. Stephen Miller of San Francisco called it "excellent," though he took issue with the idea that Trump is "novel" in his divisiveness. But Allen R. Fuller of Fairport, N.Y., disagreed with the contention that Trump represents anything but a "brighter future." Jeff Schoenwald of Thousand Oaks, Calif., remarked on the timing of the past two covers: "How ironic! One week the cover story is about 'Guns in America,' and the next it is about death of Americans by guns!"

'We can do better! #LOVE covers a multitude of sins.'

BARBARA PATTERSON, Lansing, Mich.

GUNS IN AMERICA Readers had thoughtful reactions to the Nov. 5 special report on guns in America. Ray Erikson, a longtime NRA member in North Redington Beach, Fla., called it "the most balanced public discussion of gun culture and gun violence I have ever seen in print." Tim Ackert of Orlando, who noted that he supports Second Amendment rights, said he was left "in a sad state of mind" about a lack of conversation on "responsible weapon legislation." The Rev. Greg Bar in Cape Cod, Mass., said he's still a gun-control supporter, but the report "widened my perspective on the whole issue."

'This article represents what journalism should be in a democratic country.'

ERIC COMERMA, Newport, R.I.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS Want to be part of TIME's upcoming Optimists issue? Last year's issue was guest-edited by Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates. This time around, Academy Award–nominated director Ava DuVernay *(Selma, 13th)* is taking the reins. As part of the multimedia project, she's calling for 30-second videos that show us what makes *you* feel optimistic. For details, entry requirements and deadlines, visit **apply.time.com/time-optimists-2018**

MONKEY BUSINESS On TIME.com, meet a service monkey trained by the Boston nonprofit Helping Hands, which pairs the primates with people with quadriplegia. Above, Travis Amick, 31, and a 30-year-old capuchin named Siggy practice having Siggy turn the light on. See more at **time.com/service-monkeys**

TIME POLL
With the U.S. midterm elections over, what happens in 2020 is anyone's guess—though 56% of American adult women don't think a female President will be elected then, according to a national poll conducted recently by TIME and SSRS. Women of color and Democratic women were more optimistic about the possibility than white women and Republicans. See the full results at **time.com/poll-women**

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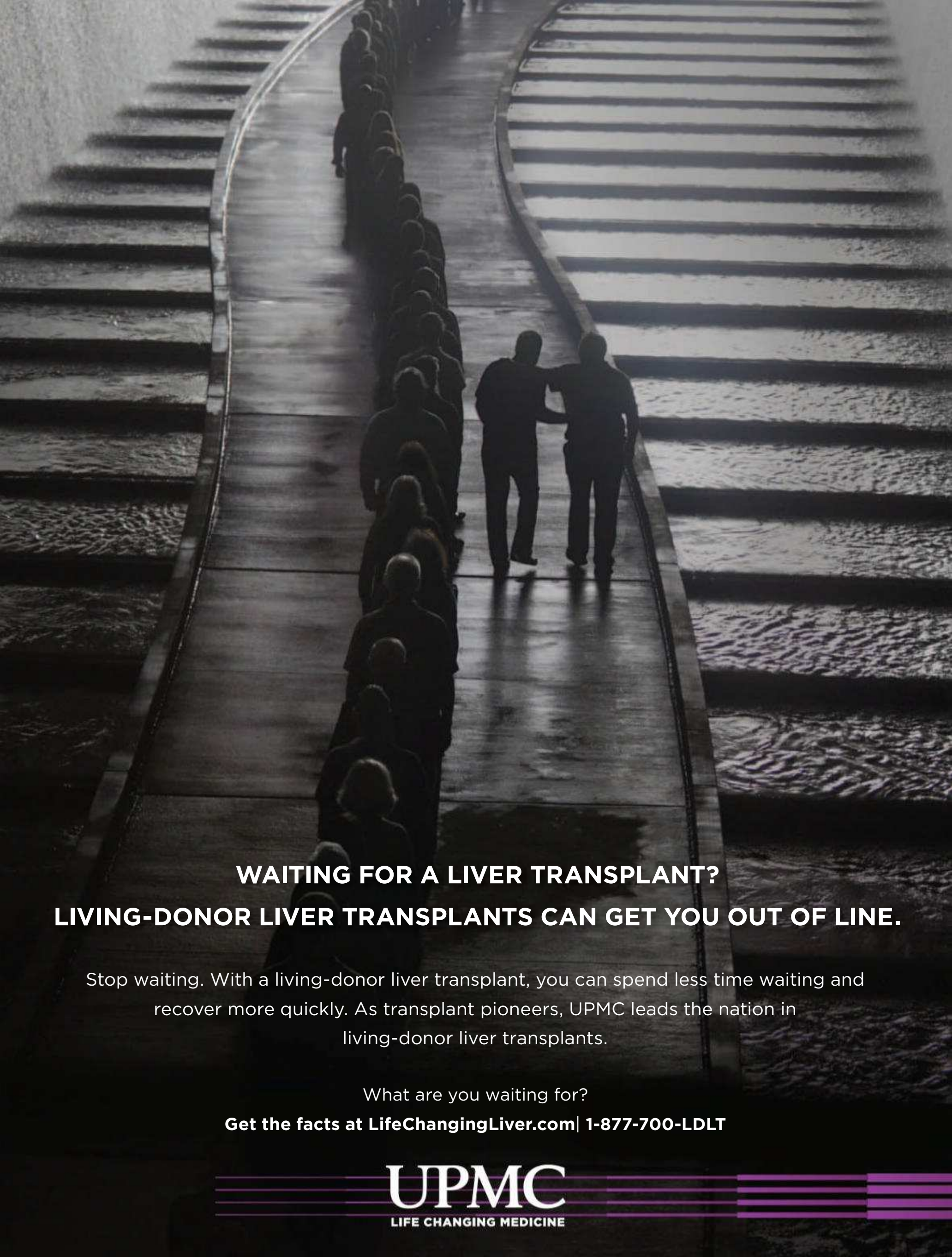
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‘Nothing was special today. I was just ready.’

MARY KEITANY,
Kenyan runner, after winning the women’s title in the New York City Marathon for the fourth time on Nov. 4; she finished in 2 hr. 22 min. 48 sec.

‘I’M SO F-CKING PROUD OF YOU GUYS.’

BETO O’ROURKE,
Democrat, thanking supporters in an uncensored televised speech conceding the Texas U.S. Senate race to incumbent Republican Ted Cruz

‘[It] may be a fully operational probe sent intentionally to Earth vicinity by an alien civilization.’

ABRAHAM LOEB AND SHMUEL BIALY,
of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, acknowledging an unlikely but possible origin of an object that flew through the solar system last year, in a paper to be published in *Astrophysical Journal Letters*

80,000

Total passing yards accumulated by New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady as of the team’s Nov. 4 victory over the Green Bay Packers, an NFL record

‘I really hope that whatever happened wasn’t painful or at least was quick.’

ABDULLAH KHASHOGGI,
son of Jamal Khashoggi, in a Nov. 5 interview with CNN; he and his brother said they’re focused on locating the remains of their father, who was killed at Saudi Arabia’s Istanbul consulate on Oct. 2

‘Trade war is the most stupid thing in this world.’

JACK MA,
co-founder of Chinese commerce giant Alibaba, speaking at a Nov. 5 conference about tit-for-tat tariffs by China and the U.S.

1,792

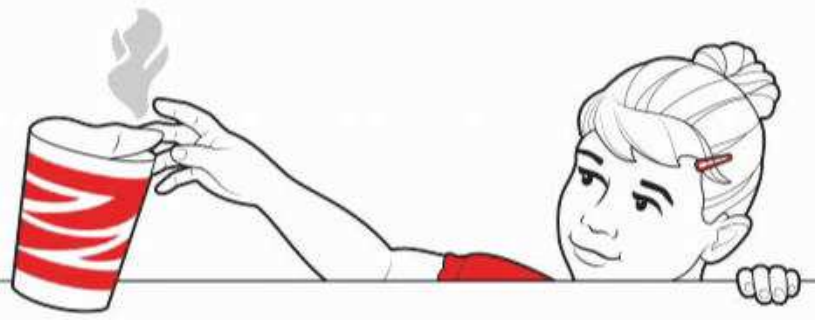
Distance in miles that Ross Edgley has swum since June; he completed a swim around Great Britain on Nov. 4

Lowe’s
The home-improvement chain is closing 50+ stores

Highs
Michigan legalized marijuana for recreational purposes

1 in 5

Proportion of all childhood scald burns in the U.S. that are caused by instant-soup products, according to research presented at the American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference



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SOURCES: ASSOCIATED PRESS; CNN; NEW YORK TIMES

The Brief

RED FLAGS The days of U.S.-Iranian rapprochement, which peaked at this 2015 conference, are long over

INSIDE

HOW THE DEPARTURE OF JEFF SESSIONS COULD AFFECT THE MUELLER PROBE

WHY THE TALLEST STATUE IN THE WORLD IS RAISING HACKLES AND HOPES IN INDIA

WHAT A UTAH MAYOR, KILLED IN ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN, SAID ABOUT SACRIFICE

PHOTOGRAPH BY CARLOS BARRIA

DIPLOMACY

Iran sanctions test U.S. diplomatic power

By W.J. Hennigan

IT IS FASHIONABLE TO ARGUE THAT U.S. GLOBAL power is fading, but you wouldn't necessarily know it from Iran. Over the past six months, President Donald Trump has turned the global financial system into a weapon against Tehran, despite resistance from virtually every major world power, and he is getting results. The policy has triggered an exodus of corporations and financial institutions that would rather abandon their investments in Iran than risk U.S. Treasury Department sanctions. On Nov. 5, Trump's Administration made its boldest move yet, restoring crippling penalties on Iran's oil, banking and shipping sectors.

But if American money is talking, and many of the world's big business players are walking, it's less clear whether Trump will achieve the ultimate goal of his "maximum-pressure campaign" against Tehran: diminishing Iranian influence in the Middle East.

The U.S. hasn't been shy about setting benchmarks for policy success. On the day he unveiled the latest sanctions that now target more than 900 Iranian individuals, businesses and banks, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told reporters, "The Iranian regime has a choice. It can either do a 180-degree turn from its outlaw course of action and act like a normal country, or it can see its economy crumble."

Pompeo said more than 100 companies have already withdrawn from Iran or canceled plans to do business there while over 20 nations have stopped importing Iranian oil, "taking more than 1 million barrels of crude per day off the market." Saudi Arabia, Iran's archenemy, has increased its oil production to near record levels amid U.S. pressure to keep prices down; international crude-oil futures touched a three-month low of $71.18 early in the week as expectations of shortages faded.

French energy giant Total, Danish shipping giant A.P. Moller-Maersk and French carmaker Peugeot are among the growing number of businesses to flee Iran under the threat of U.S. sanctions. And in a remarkable show of American financial supremacy, the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, known as SWIFT, said on Nov. 5 that it would suspend an unspecified number of Iranian banks from its systems, essentially unplugging Iran's already anemic economy from the international banking industry.

'We are confronting a bullying enemy. We have to stand to win.'

HASSAN ROUHANI, Iranian President

Tehran has seen the value of its currency, the rial, collapse to record lows of 189,000 to the U.S. dollar—a nearly 80% drop since January. In an economy based on petrodollars and heavy importing, most Iranians have lost much of their wealth as prices soared for everything from daily goods to cars. Sporadic protests have popped up throughout the country because of the economic free fall. "We are in the economic war situation," Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said during nationally televised remarks after the sanctions were unveiled. "We are confronting a bullying enemy. We have to stand to win."

FOR ALL THE ECONOMIC PRESSURE, Iran may yet pull off a victory, for a simple reason: much of the world is ambivalent about the U.S. moves. The Trump Administration's efforts target Iran's pursuit of ballistic-missile technology and its support for proxy militias in Yemen, Syria and Lebanon, which other nations agree are destabilizing the region. But the U.S. sanctions violate the Obama Administration's 2015 deal with Iran, which brought Tehran's nuclear program under tight control. Everyone from China to the U.K. has opposed breaking the nuclear deal to penalize Iran's regional bad behavior.

Tehran, which for its part has complied with the 2015 agreement despite the U.S. pullout, is seeking to split other countries from the U.S. by salvaging a deal with its remaining signatories: Russia, China, Germany, Britain and France. There is some indication it is working. On Nov. 5, the U.S. granted waivers to China, India, Italy, Greece, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey to allow them to continue buying Iranian oil despite America's sanctions. Pompeo explained that the "temporary" exemptions were meant to avoid a major spike in world oil prices.

While the U.S. says such moves show diplomatic finesse and give it cards to play, even Administration backers say wavering international support could undermine the U.S. effort to bring Tehran to heel. Richard Goldberg, a sanctions expert who helped draft Senate bills that toughened the 2015 deal, said the Administration's moves on Iran are important "first steps" but that Trump must "continue to build pressure day after day nonstop." Says Goldberg: "Otherwise, the regime will adapt and find ways to evade."

And as the 2015 deal showed, getting Iran to back down requires a unified front. "The only thing the Iranian leadership deems more dangerous than suffering from sanctions is surrendering to them," says Ali Vaez, the Iran project director at the International Crisis Group. Which means the Trump Administration may yet learn that in the Middle East, at least, there is a big difference between wielding power and achieving results. ◻

PREVIOUS PAGE: AFP/GETTY IMAGES; THESE PAGES: ROUHANI: ATTA KENARE—AFP/GETTY IMAGES; SESSIONS: JONATHAN ERNST—REUTERS

Trump and Sessions, at a 2017 FBI graduation ceremony, had a troubled history

THE BULLETIN

Trump fires A.G. Sessions, triggering a fight over Justice

LESS THAN A DAY INTO AMERICA'S NEW, postmidterm political reality, President Donald Trump announced via tweet that he was firing his long-suffering Attorney General, Jeff Sessions. The move immediately put in jeopardy special counsel Robert Mueller's probe into Trump's ties to the Russian 2016 election meddling campaign, raised questions about the independence of the Justice Department and upped the stakes of the coming confrontation between the Trump Administration and the new Democratic leadership of the House of Representatives.

With the midterm results still trickling in, the President moved quickly to remedy one of the most troubled alliances of his political career. Sessions, 71, had been the first Senator to endorse Trump's presidential bid. But he became a pariah inside the White House after he followed Department of Justice protocols and recused himself from oversight of the Mueller investigation because of his role in the 2016 campaign.

Trump, infuriated by what he perceived as a lack of loyalty on Sessions' part, had long tried to push Sessions out, despite Sessions' constant efforts to advance Trump's agenda, like rolling back civil rights protections, cracking down on immigration and slow-walking criminal-justice reform. "I don't have an Attorney General," Trump groused in September.

Trump tapped Sessions' top aide, Matthew Whitaker, to be acting Attorney General, a role with vast power over law-enforcement and national-security activities, including domestic and foreign terrorist threats, civil rights, federal prosecutions and legal challenges to the U.S. government. More immediately, Whitaker may assume oversight of the Mueller probe, with authority to approve, or block, investigative and prosecutorial steps. In August last year, Whitaker said in a CNN op-ed that Mueller's questions about Trump's finances could breach guidelines limiting the probe.

Trump's move expands what already was going to be a contentious relationship with Capitol Hill, as the Republican-led Senate will have to confirm a permanent replacement for Sessions. —PHILIP ELLIOTT

NEWS TICKER

Amazon to double up on HQ2

In its search of a home for its second headquarters—the so-called HQ2—Amazon looks set to **spread 50,000 jobs across two locations** rather than choosing one city, according to reports. The most likely destinations: Long Island City in Queens, N.Y.; and Crystal City, in Arlington, Va.

More than 200 mass graves found in Iraq

In Iraq, **202 mass graves containing thousands of bodies** in total have been found in regions formerly controlled by ISIS, according to the U.N. The militants' campaign of violence "may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and possible genocide," the U.N. declared in its Nov. 6 report on the finding.

Florida shooter was known to cops

A man identified by police as the shooter who **killed two women and injured five others at a yoga studio in Tallahassee, Fla.,** had been previously reported to law enforcement for harassing women around the campus of Florida State University. Scott Paul Beierle, 40, killed himself after the Nov. 2 attack.

NEWS TICKER

Facebook admits role in Myanmar

A Facebook executive said Nov. 5 that the company had failed to prevent its **platform from being used to "incite offline violence"** in Myanmar, citing an independent report commissioned by Facebook. Human-rights abuses against the mostly Muslim Rohingya minority led more than 900,000 to flee their homes.

Tanzania anti-gay crackdown prompts alert

In Tanzania, sex between men can lead to 30 years in prison. On Nov. 3, the U.S. warned Americans in the African nation to "review" their social-media profiles after the **governor of Dar es Salaam announced a task force to track down gay people** and called for citizens to report anyone they believe to be gay to the government.

Former SS guard on trial in Germany

A former SS guard has gone on trial in Germany for **complicity in the murder of hundreds of prisoners** at a Nazi camp during World War II. Johann Rehbogen, 94, served from 1942 to 1944 at the Stutthof concentration camp in what is now northern Poland.

POSTCARD

In India, the world's tallest statue heightens political division

THE MESSAGE CARRIED BY THE MILITARY planes wasn't exactly subtle. Scattering flower petals, they traced the colors of India's flag across the sky in saffron, green and white plumes. Below them stood the Statue of Unity, a 597-ft. sculpture immortalizing Indian independence leader Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Oct. 31, which would have been Patel's 143rd birthday. Gazing out over the horizon at Kevadiya Colony, in India's western state of Gujarat, it stands almost four times as high as the Statue of Liberty and dwarfs China's Spring Temple Buddha—previously the world's tallest statue—by 177 ft.

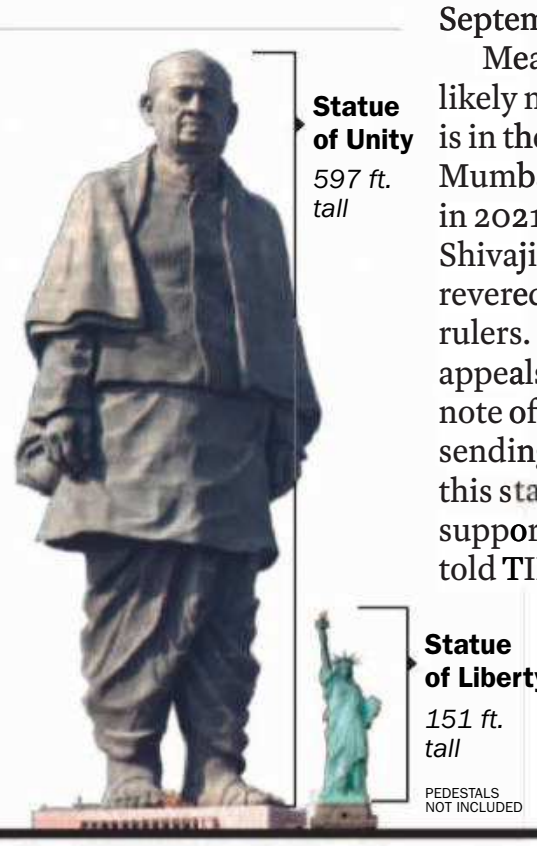
"This statue is an answer to all those who question India's power and might," Modi said, in case anyone hadn't gotten the idea. The gargantuan sculpture, which was partly crowdfunded but mostly paid for by the state, took 33 months to build and cost $400 million.

One of India's founding fathers, Patel came from humble origins in Gujarat, like Modi. After partition in 1947, he persuaded the vast majority of the subcontinent's local rulers to join India rather than Pakistan. Modi announced plans for the statue back in 2010, when he was chief minister of Gujarat; just months after he became Prime Minister in 2014, a coalition led by his Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) declared Patel's birthday to be National Unity Day. And unveiling the statue ahead of 2019 elections may score with right-wing Hindu voters who are the party's base.

But Patel was actually a member of the centrist Indian National Congress—the BJP's biggest rival today. Critics say the BJP, which was founded in 1980, is trying to appropriate Patel's legacy. To them, the sculpture is a crude attempt to rewrite history. "For a party that claims to do everything in the name of the nation, they don't have a past to invoke," says Sucheta Mahajan, a professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi.

Modi faced criticism after photos circulated showing Chinese workers—who had come to lay the bronze cladding from a Chinese foundry—at the site of the statue. That's a source of potential embarrassment to Modi, who's staked much on a "Make in India" initiative. "It is a matter of shame that 'Made in China' would be engraved behind this statue," Rahul Gandhi, Congress president, said at a September rally.

Meanwhile, an even taller and likely more divisive sculpture is in the works off the coast of Mumbai. Scheduled to be done in 2021, it is of Chhatrapati Shivaji, a Hindu warrior king revered for battling Muslim rulers. Projecting Hindu might appeals to Modi's base. "Take note of the message we are sending out to the world with this statue," an excited BJP supporter at the unveiling told TIME. "Just the thought of it sends shivers down my spine."
—ABHISHYANT KIDANGOOR/GUJARAT, INDIA



STATUE OF UNITY: AMIT DAVE—REUTERS; STATUE OF LIBERTY: GARY HERSHORN—GETTY IMAGES

FOOD

Sweet sorrow

On Nov. 1, Hershey's sparked an online backlash by confirming plans for Reese's Thins, a 40% smaller take on peanut-butter cups. Here, other candy controversies. —*Ciara Nugent*

MILO MAYHEM
Nestlé rattled New Zealanders by removing vanilla flavoring from Milo, a popular cocoa beverage, in 2015. The company said the tweak to the 83-year-old drink made it healthier and more sustainable.

TOBLERONE TURMOIL
In 2016, Mondelez widened the gaps between the chocolate peaks on Toblerone bars in the U.K., citing rising costs. But it reversed course in July, saying the move hadn't proved a "long-term answer" for customers.

NUTELLA NO-NO
A German consumer group set off 2017's #NutellaGate when it noticed Ferrero had added more milk powder to the hazelnut spread, turning it a brighter color. Ferrero dismissed fears over the "fine-tuning."

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Milestones

DIED
Former U.K. Cabinet secretary **Jeremy Heywood,** on Nov. 4, of cancer, at 56. Heywood served the past four Prime Ministers, from Tony Blair to Theresa May.

DISAPPEARED
An islet off Japan's northern coast, which was 4.5 ft. above sea level when it was last surveyed, in 1987. The Japanese coast guard is looking for the **tiny, uninhabited island,** which is used to mark the country's territorial waters.

REJECTED
Independence from France, by voters in the South Pacific archipelago territory of New Caledonia, in a Nov. 4 referendum.

RESIGNED
James Brady, **chairman of the University System of Maryland's board of regents,** on Nov. 1; the board has clashed with the school's president over an investigation into the death of a football player during practice.

ARRESTED
Six people suspected of **planning a "violent" attack on French President Emmanuel Macron,** on Nov. 6, by antiterrorism units, per French officials.

RULED
That the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service **violated federal laws by not protecting the last wild red wolves,** by a federal judge in North Carolina, on Nov. 4. The agency planned to decrease the wolves' territory and allowed landowners to shoot them.

Taylor, who started his military service in 2003, deployed to Iraq twice and Afghanistan once before his tour this year

DIED
Brent Taylor
Hometown hero

WHEN BRENT TAYLOR, THE MAYOR OF NORTH OGDEN, UTAH, found out that he would be going to Afghanistan—his fourth military deployment since 2006—he told constituents he was honored. "Service is what leadership is all about," the father of seven said in a Facebook video in January.

Taylor, a major in the Army National Guard, worked to train Afghan commando units as part of a plan to nearly double commando ranks in the country by 2020. He often shared photos from his time abroad on social media and planned to return to work as mayor after a year of service. But Taylor, 39, was killed in Kabul on Nov. 3, apparently by one of the people he had been sent to train. The attacker also wounded another U.S. service member. It was the fifth insider attack in Afghanistan in four months, and Taylor's loss served as a reminder of the difficulty of the 17-year Afghan war and its toll on American families across the country.

His wife Jennie feels "heartache but no regret," her sister told reporters—and that sentiment seemed to echo Taylor's attitude. He told viewers of his January video that his three priorities were God, family and country. "I have given my life to serve all three of these loyalties," he said, "whenever and however I can."

—ABIGAIL ABRAMS

FILED
Grievance
A sport in the balance

USA GYMNASTICS OVERSEES much of the sport in America, from enrolling member gyms to supporting Olympic athletes. But it's now at risk of losing that authority. On Nov. 5, the head of the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) filed a complaint to its board against USA Gymnastics. The USOC recognizes the national governing bodies of various sports; the complaint is a first step toward revoking that recognition.

The action was prompted by USA Gymnastics' failure to adequately address an ongoing crisis that emerged in 2015; hundreds of gymnasts eventually revealed that they'd been sexually abused by team doctor Larry Nassar, who is now in prison for his crimes. As the scandal unfolded, USA Gymnastics named as interim CEO an attorney from a firm that worked to protect Nassar, and appointed a coach who had backed him to head a training program. The group, which faces lawsuits from gymnasts for not protecting them, is "evaluating the best path forward." If its status is revoked, U.S. gymnasts will be supported by the USOC until a new group starts up—and, athletes hope, a troubling era ends.

—ALICE PARK

Simone Biles is among Nassar's accusers

TAYLOR: NORTH OGDEN; BILES: KARIM JAAFAR—AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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Europe's antitrust enforcer **Margrethe Vestager** mulls her legacy after taking on Silicon Valley

By Vivienne Walt/Brussels

AS I ARRIVE TO MEET MARGRETHE VESTAGER, she is bounding down the long corridor outside her Brussels office toward a group of German teenagers just leaving her office. "I forgot to offer you these!" Europe's Competition Commissioner says, handing them a box of chocolate-covered licorice from her hometown of Copenhagen. "You have to try this." As she races back to her office, one student gazes after her. "Wow," she says, through a mouthful of licorice. "She's amazing."

There are few European Union officials whom jaded teenagers would ever want to meet, let alone gush over. But Vestager, Denmark's former Deputy Prime Minister, has grown used to getting strong reactions from people, not all as positive.

Four years after being appointed to one of the E.U.'s more controversial positions, Vestager has become both a global celebrity and a lightning rod. As Europe's antitrust czar, she is responsible for maintaining a level playing field for every business operating inside the bloc's 28 countries. And in her zeal for challenging vested interests, she has taken on some of the world's biggest corporations, including Apple, Amazon, Facebook and Google.

To many Europeans and Americans, hers is a voice of sanity in an age of gluttonous profitmaking. To others, including tech tycoons like Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Apple CEO Tim Cook, she is an irksome foreign official who has pried into their affairs and demanded changes in the way they conduct business. "People in the tech industry are not used to being told what to do," says Thomas Vinje, a lawyer in Brussels who heads the global antitrust team for Clifford Chance. "She has certainly not made friends with Silicon Valley."

VESTAGER, 50, DOES NOT CARE. On a rainy fall day, sitting in a homely office decorated with contemporary Danish paintings, she describes how she arrived in Brussels in 2014 with only a sketchy knowledge of the inner workings of giant companies. She approached her job based on a principle she learned early in life, she says: fairness. Too often, large corporations seemed to trample smaller ones underfoot by operating under completely different rules.

So she decided it would be one rule for all. Under E.U. law, Vestager investigates complaints of unfair competition, and then her rulings are heard in European courts, where plaintiffs have the chance to argue their side. In the U.S., it's a role split between the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice's antitrust division. Vestager says she has "very close relationships" with both. But her office has pursued U.S. firms more aggressively than the country's own regulators. In June 2017, she fined Google €2.4 billion ($2.7 billion) for effectively shutting out competitors on its shopping service, and in July, she fined it €4.34 billion ($4.94 billion) for creating an effective monopoly through its Android operating system.

Her remit also extends to tax avoidance. In 2015, for example, she ruled on a deal Starbucks struck with the Netherlands to pay rock-bottom tax rates in the country, where it had its regional headquarters at the time. Vestager found the agreement amounted to illegal "state aid" and forced the coffee giant to pay up to €30 million ($33.5 million) in back taxes. "Our democracies tell us we are all equal under the law," she says. "So it is extremely frustrating when you see that 'equal under the law' is for many, but not for everyone," she says. "Most businesses have to make a real effort to be able to pay their taxes and make a profit."

Though Vestager says she has not intentionally targeted U.S. companies, they have been her best-known cases by far. The most notorious has been with the world's most profitable company. In 2016, Vestager ordered Apple to pay a record €13 billion ($14.8 billion) in back taxes to the Republic of Ireland, where Apple has run parts of its business since 1980 under a low-tax structure. A furious Cook called her ruling "total political crap." The money now sits in an escrow account while both Apple and Ireland itself—fearful of losing its business-friendly reputation—appeal the ruling.

This sense of right and wrong was instilled in Vestager when she was a young girl being raised in relative isolation on Denmark's west coast. Her parents were Lutheran priests who ministered to their small-town community. Townsfolk showed up daily to discuss their problems. Homeless people "would get food and a beer, and a place to stay for the night," she says. "Everyone was always received."

Now Vestager is in a position to minister to a much bigger population. And she seems genuinely offended by what she sees. Increasingly, the work has veered from her traditional competition portfolio into a much more incendiary issue: data privacy. And once again, a U.S. corporate giant was found to be a key offender. In May 2017, she fined the social-media giant Facebook €110 million ($125 million) for having secretly shared users' profiles with WhatsApp, after the company bought the communications firm in 2014.

Where Vestager led the way, the E.U. followed.

VESTAGER QUICK FACTS

Early start
In 1998, at age 29, Vestager became Denmark's Minister for Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs.

Small screen
Her domestic political career helped inspire the Danish TV drama *Borgen*, about a female Prime Minister.

User-friendly
Despite her run-ins with tech firms as an E.U. commissioner, she admits being an Apple user. However, she does not have a personal Facebook page.

OLAF BLECKER

In May, after revelations that the data-mining company Cambridge Analytica had harvested huge numbers of Facebook profiles without users' knowledge during the run-up to the 2016 U.S. elections, European lawmakers summoned co-founder Zuckerberg to Brussels. At a fierce E.U. hearing, one politician accused him of creating a "digital monster" that was "out of control." Zuckerberg insisted Facebook's 2 billion users "own their data."

Not so, Vestager says—that data is currency, and Europeans are giving it up without realizing it. "This idea of services for free is a fiction," she says. "You may not realize what currency you are using, but you will be paying, rest assured."

She believes that there is now sufficient discontent among users for lawmakers to force through change. "People now realize, 'The data is mine. I do not want to give it away for free so you can make a lot of money on it, just like as a taxpayer I should not have to pick up your bills,'" she says.

As much as curbing monopolies, Vestager wants her legacy to be reining in how companies suck up personal data, which she believes stifles competition. Since international law has only just begun tackling the issue, Vestager has appointed outside advisers to help draft new regulations. This, she says, is now her most urgent work. "We are at the end of the beginning of an industrial revolution," she says. "Tech is changing our entire society."

'It is frustrating when you see that "equal under the law" is for many, but not for everyone.'

MARGRETHE VESTAGER, E.U. Competition Commissioner

Yet Vestager's work might soon be at an end. Her first five-year term expires in 2019, and her bid for a second faces opposition from Denmark's government, whose blessing she needs; her own political party is no longer in power. With her future uncertain, she is racing to finish cases, from her office filled with vibrant art and objects.

One that sits on her coffee table is a sculpture of a hand with a raised middle finger. It was a gift from a hostile Danish trade union in 2012, while she was Economy and Interior Minister, which she says reminds her that some people will always disagree with her. "Would Zuckerberg or Tim Cook also give you a middle finger?" I ask. She laughs, and says, "They would not have the imagination." ◻

LightBox

Mourning again

Three days after 17-year-old Malcolm Mide-Madariola was fatally stabbed on Nov. 2 outside a London Underground station, friends and family gather there to pay their respects. Police arrested two teens on suspicion of murder in the case, one of five fatal knifings in six days in London. This city has already had more murders this year than in all of 2017.

Photograph by Dan Kitwood—Getty Images

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I didn't talk
for a very long time
Jacob Sanchez
Diagnosed with autism
Lack of speech is a sign of autism. Learn the others at autismspeaks.org/signs.
AUTISM SPEAKS

MEDIA

PROTECTING THE PRESS

By Harold Evans

Marie Colvin was marked to die. She was targeted by Syria's dictator Bashar Assad as surely as the shadowy powers in the royal court of Saudi Arabia plotted the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. He was dead the moment he walked into the Saudi consulate. She was dead the moment Assad's artillery picked up her satellite broadcast.

INSIDE

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF GOING OUTSIDE

WHY DEPLOYING U.S. TROOPS TO THE BORDER WOULD BE A MISTAKE

HOW THE 401(K) HAS BECOME OUTDATED

A new film, *A Private War,* tells how Colvin, in a blazing portrait by Rosamund Pike, thrust herself into six killing zones. She lost sight in one eye from a grenade exploding in her face in Sri Lanka, but she remained glamorous and graceful. All her life she was driven by a fierce conviction that only firsthand, detailed reporting could make a difference to lives ransacked by war. "Why is the world not here?" she asked many times—in East Timor, Libya, Kosovo, Chechnya, Iran, Iraq, Syria.

Today there are fewer journalists and photographers to report on humanitarian crises. Their publishers have been deprived of revenues by social-media juggernauts—and reporters and editors are themselves more in danger than they ever were. We are inured to the fatal roulette of reporting, that men and women knowingly hazard their lives for truth. They get caught in the cross fire of a battlefield; they walk on a land mine; they're mistaken for combatants. But the majority of journalists' deaths are not bad luck. They are assassinations. From 1992 to 2018, combat cross fire killed 299 journalists, 170 on dangerous assignments. No fewer than 849 were murdered at the instigation of governments—often their own—criminal gangs, terrorists, corrupt businesses, all of them maddened by a press trying to do its job, independently winnowing verifiable facts from complexity and exposing wrongdoing.

Intrepid Colvin enters a tunnel in Gaza

THE MAINSTREAM PRESS struggles to afford this reporting while social media runs amok with rumor, hearsay and hate speech. The Trump-obsessed pipe bomber suspect Cesar Sayoc Jr. had a megaphone on Facebook. Twitter refused to pull his tweet inciting assault on a TV commentator. Alleged Pittsburgh shooter Robert Bowers swam in the digital sewer of Gab, a website favored by neo-Nazis and white supremacists. Facebook and Twitter endanger democracy itself. Greedy for ad revenue, they took money from Russian agitprop campaigns designed to hoodwink millions of American voters. Facebook allowed Cambridge Analytica to harvest private information from more than 50 million accounts.

Yet it's the mainstream press, legally and morally accountable, that Donald Trump defames as "dangerous & sick," while irresponsible social media escapes liability. It enjoys broad immunity thanks to Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, a gift from legislators who once dreamed of a universe of honest exchanges in search of mutual understanding. Meanwhile Trump, the great divider, says the mainstream press purposely causes division and distrust and the American people should be grateful for his "great service" explaining what is true. He condemns anti-Semitism after Pittsburgh but then is reckless in fomenting violence. In the wake of Khashoggi's murder, he praised a bully Congressman for body-slamming a reporter ("my kind of guy"). The mood he creates at his rallies is reflected by a supporter in a T-shirt emblazoned "A Rope. A Tree. A Journalist. Some assembly required." Whatever journalists do to protect people from fraud, cheating or drug dealing or however they risk their lives in foreign reporting, they're still "enemies of the people," in Trump (and Stalin) parlance.

This year the Committee to Protect Journalists recorded 28 reporters murdered because of their work: Daphne Caruana Galizia disclosed smuggling and money laundering implicating high levels of the Maltese government—killed by a car bomb. In Colombia, Javier Ortega and Paúl Rivas reported drug violence—kidnapped and killed. Jan Kuciak, investigating tax fraud among Slovak businessmen with political links, was shot dead in his apartment. Rarely do local crimes attract international attention. Most journalists die in anonymity, and their killers escape justice.

Reporters Without Borders cites these murders as marks of democratic decline in Europe, symptoms of antipress rhetoric in countries like Hungary, Albania and Austria. And now the U.S.

International law prescribes press protections in Protocol 79 to the Geneva Conventions. Some 174 nations signed and ratified it. America has signed but is one of only five countries yet to ratify.

Evans is the former editor of Britain's Sunday Times *and the author of* Do I Make Myself Clear?

SHORT READS

Highlights from stories on **time.com/ideas**

Accountability is not enough

While former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Bill Richardson endorses holding Myanmar to account for the genocide of the Rohingya, he warns against its overshadowing **"the need to bring about tangible improvements in Rohingyas' lives."**

Why reporters are impartial

In the wake of Senator Joe McCarthy's demagoguery, the press was widely criticized for its objectivity, explains Matthew Pressman, author of *On Press.* But, he writes, **"being criticized simultaneously by people with opposing ideological viewpoints** convinced the people in charge of the country's leading news organizations to stay the course."

When players have power

"College athletes are taught to conform to the rules," writes TIME's Sean Gregory. "Respect your coach, or suffer the consequences." Which is why, he explains, the University of Maryland's firing of its football coach after player protests signaled a new era in athlete activism.

COLVIN: SEAMUS MURPHY—PANOS PICTURES/REDUX; CABLE: JACK TAYLOR—GETTY IMAGES

THE RISK REPORT

The trans-Pacific trade deal survives, but the U.S. and China matter more

By Ian Bremmer

AFTER MONTHS OF delays—and one very public withdrawal—the trans-Pacific trade deal officially has a start date. The re-christened Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership will come into force on Dec. 30, thanks to a herculean effort by Japan and its Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. On Oct. 31, Australia became the sixth country after Japan, Mexico, Singapore, New Zealand and Canada to ratify the terms of the 11-nation agreement; Chile, Malaysia, Brunei, Peru and Vietnam are now on deck.

The deal sometimes called TPP-11 is on track to become one of the world's largest-ever trade deals, covering 14% of world GDP and roughly 500 million people. Had the U.S. joined the original version of TPP planned under President Barack Obama's "pivot" to Asia, it would have been even bigger—governing the trade terms of roughly 40% of the world's economic output and presenting an undeniable challenge to China's economic reach. However, President Donald Trump preferred to withdraw the U.S. from the deal when he took office and instead take on Beijing directly, launching a trade war with China that has steadily escalated throughout 2018.

For those committed to free trade, a deal is always better than no deal, especially when it covers a combined $10 trillion of GDP. But while TPP-11 will help lower barriers and improve cooperation among the signatories, it will do very little to check the collateral damage of the current U.S.-China trade war. The U.S. and China remain the world's two largest economies, and any bilateral tensions between them will inevitably have major knock-on effects on the rest of the global economy. A trans-Pacific trade deal does little to change that reality.

While TPP-11 will lower barriers and improve cooperation, it will do little to check the collateral damage of the U.S.-China trade war

That remains true even if the U.K. signs up to join the trade deal once it has left the E.U. next year; Abe said in October that he would welcome Britain with "open arms." The added presence of the world's fifth-largest economy and a major importer would certainly add ballast to TPP-11. But the U.K. has nowhere near the economic heft of the U.S. and would presumably still be suffering from its breakup hangover with its own closest trading partner, the E.U.

Ironically, a country that could provide this deal with that much needed economic weight would be China. China has been quietly toying with the idea of joining the trans-Pacific deal over the long run, having little interest in being left out of consequential economic architecture in Asia. Chinese media reported in October that Beijing was exploring the possibilities of a deal it previously called too complex to consider joining.

It's hard to see China agreeing to the deal's current requirements on issues like labor rights and intellectual-property protections. But if TPP-11 begins to deliver on its economic promise, China will not want to miss out and will begin exploring space for compromise. Japan may welcome the possibility of China's joining up, seeing it as an opportunity to constructively shape Beijing's approach to global trade norms and rules. And the more countries join—Colombia, Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea have all indicated interest—the more attractive signing up for the new trade deal becomes for China.

But that's many years down the road, with plenty of thorny negotiations to overcome. And much depends on how the U.S.-China trade war plays out. The forward momentum of TPP-11 is proof that other countries are attempting to hedge. But there's no real way to reverse the demise of what was once a global free market. □

QUICK TALK

Vince Cable

The leader of the U.K.'s Liberal Democrats discusses why he's calling for a new referendum on Britain's membership in the European Union after the final terms of Brexit are reached.

Would another referendum amount to a rerun of the first? It's definitely not a rerun. There was a lot of dishonesty during the referendum in June 2016. Brexit is not remotely like what we were told at the time. It seems absolutely right that the public are given a choice whether they want to accept what's been negotiated on their behalf, or to remain within the E.U.

Do you think the result would be any different? Yes. It's very clear there has been a change in the mood. There is a general sense that the government has made a mess of the negotiation. People are not blaming the E.U.

What effect do you think Brexit will have on Britain's role in the world? It's very difficult to see how it can be positive. I think most people would accept Britain has become somewhat marginalized. Britain was seen as a progressive force, and it was influencing the whole of Europe, and we've lost that. *—Billy Perrigo*

Cable, 75, plans to resign once Brexit "is resolved"

A prescription you can't fill at the pharmacy

By Jamie Ducharme

DR. ROBERT ZARR, A PEDIATRICIAN IN Washington, D.C., often prescribes therapies that don't come in a bottle or a pill pack. They're redeemable only outdoors, in the fresh air of a local park. These "nature prescriptions"—spend an hour each week playing tennis, for instance, or explore all the soccer fields near your home—might sound whimsical. But Zarr is serious about his scripts, which are recorded in his patients' electronic health records.

"There's a paradigm shift in the way we think about parks: not just as a place to recreate, but literally as a prescription, a place to improve your health," says Zarr, who writes up to 10 park prescriptions per day. In 2017 he founded Park Rx America to make it easier for more health professionals to write park prescriptions for patients of all ages, particularly those with obesity, mental-health issues, or chronic conditions like hypertension and Type 2 diabetes.

Zarr is part of a growing movement to bring the outdoors into medicine. Nobody is claiming that nature will cure diseases on its own, of course, but physicians are capitalizing on the well-established mental and physical health benefits of spending time in green space. A 2017 research review published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* analyzed 64 studies that explored the effects of "forest bathing," or taking a woodsy walk while tuning in to nature, and concluded that the practice is linked to stress relief, less depression and anxiety, lower blood pressure, decreased heart rate and more.

BY WRITING nature prescriptions—alongside pharmaceutical prescriptions, when necessary—physicians are encouraging their patients to get outdoors and take advantage of what many view to be free medicine. The specificity that comes with framing these recommendations as prescriptions, Zarr says, motivates his patients to actually do them. "It's something to look forward to and to try to feel successful about," he says.

In October, NHS Shetland, a government-run hospital system in Scotland, began allowing doctors at 10 medical practices to write nature prescriptions that promote outdoor activities as a routine part of patient care. And in recent years, organizations with the goal of getting people outside for their health have proliferated in the U.S. The National Park Service's Healthy Parks Healthy People program promotes parks as a "powerful health prevention strategy" locally and nationally. Walk With a Doc, which sponsors free physician-led community walks, is now in 47 states, and Park Rx, which has studied and tracked park-prescription programs since 2013, says these are now in at least 33 states and Washington, D.C. Even mental-health professionals are going green. A growing number of "eco-therapy" counselors conduct sessions outdoors to combine the benefits of therapy and nature.

Plus, these unusual prescriptions are the prettiest you'll ever fill—a fact Betty Sun, program manager at the Institute at the Golden Gate, which runs Park Rx, says encourages people to actually do them. "With social media and Instagram, when you see your friends going out to beautiful places, you want to go too," Sun says. "It's about making a positive choice in your life, rather than a punitive choice—like 'You're sick, take a pill.' It just seems so much more supportive." ◻

THE BENEFITS OF GOING OUTDOORS

RELAXATION
Studies have shown that spending time outdoors can decrease levels of the hormone cortisol, lower blood pressure and reduce other markers of stress.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
Exercise is an important pillar of health, and going outside encourages you to get moving, whether by hiking, biking, gardening or strolling.

SOCIAL SUPPORT
Parks are inherently social places. Seeing and interacting with others guards against loneliness—a major public-health threat—and fosters community.

MENTAL HEALTH
Research has shown that spending time in green space can lift mood and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, including rumination and feelings of worthlessness.

AWE
Soaking in the arresting beauty of nature has been found to lower levels of inflammation in the body and spark feelings of generosity, perspective and selflessness.

FRESH AIR
Pollution is linked to a number of ills, ranging from respiratory problems to cancer and heart disease—so breathing clean air may reduce your risks.

GETTY IMAGES

Lost in the Medicare maze? There's still time to pick a plan.
Medicare Open Enrollment ends December 7th. With helpful people, tools and plans — including the only Medicare plans with the AARP name — UnitedHealthcare® can help guide you through the confusion. Find the Medicare plan for you at **UHCmedicare.com** or call UnitedHealthcare at **1-855-639-2704,** TTY **711**.

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The border fight that America does not need

By James Stavridis

I SPENT OVER THREE YEARS AS A FOUR-star admiral and commander of U.S. Southern Command from 2006 to 2009, in charge of all U.S. military forces throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Part of my duties entailed traveling extensively from my Miami headquarters through the countries of Central America that have been cleaved by violence. I have traveled many times through much of what is now the route taken by, at minimum, 5,000 migrants traveling in caravans or other groups—mostly fleeing Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua—and led the U.S. military forces in those nations. As I look at the plan to deploy at least as many U.S. troops to our southern border to stop what President Trump incorrectly calls "an invasion," I believe we are making a significant mistake.

These active-duty troops are ill trained, improperly equipped and badly organized for this mission. They are taught to apply lethal combat power to our nation's enemies. While the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said on Nov. 5 that "there is no plan for soldiers to come in contact with immigrants," if they do, the chances of their making a mistake in a tense situation—even if they are operating in support—is significant. There is no need for imposing this risk on what is clearly a law-enforcement activity, one that should be left to civilians. If we need more Border Patrol officers, we should hire them—not throw active-duty military at the problem.

This situation would be made worse by the opportunity costs. Every day these troops spend deployed at the border—away from their families, by the way, as the holiday season unfolds—is a day they will not be training and preparing for their *real* mission: combat operations. As I look at the units selected for this mission, many of them will have to stop their training for deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, where we have active combat in progress. They could also instead be preparing to back up U.S. troops in Korea if that situation heats up again, or training for deployment to the Arabian Gulf as America reimposes sanctions on Iran and tension increases. This pseudo-deployment would waste not only dollars—up to $200 million this year, according to an independent analysis—but also, dangerously, precious training time.

Besides, the likelihood of a true, large-scale mission on the border is very low. The migrants are hundreds of miles away, largely women and children, moving very slowly and seeking only a chance to state their case for asylum and refugee status—which they are unlikely to receive from the U.S. A far better solution would be to broaden our cooperation with Mexico, which is handling the challenges reasonably well and following both its domestic law and international policy on movement of refugees. We could, for example, build refugee centers to process these asylum seekers in a humane fashion with both nations' border authorities working together.

WHERE U.S. TROOPS ARE

President Trump has said he may deploy as many as 15,000 U.S. troops to the nation's border with Mexico. These are estimates of where some of the other active American military members are, from the Department of Defense:

53,660
JAPAN

35,369
GERMANY

26,045
SOUTH KOREA

14,000
AFGHANISTAN

5,200
IRAQ

JOHN MOORE—GETTY IMAGES

What do we get from this action, then? The terrible optics of the U.S. essentially closing our border with military force—as Mexico copes with Central American refugees, and both Colombia and Brazil face true refugee crises as they seek to accommodate more than 2 million Venezuelans, most of whom are malnourished, the U.N. reports. To a region that has suffered multiple invasions and incursions from the U.S. military over the past 150 years, this evokes old, disquieting ghosts.

WE SHOULD CONTROL our border. But sending the military won't help that cause. And for many of the same reasons, a "big, beautiful wall" won't work either. Frankly, we could build a 30-ft.-high wall along the almost 2,000-mile border (at enormous cost), but here's a secret that I know because I'm an admiral: just to the left of the wall, there's an ocean. If all we do is try to block entryways, people will try to get here in a variety of ways—including by sea.

There are better ways. We should build a "smart" wall that includes some high, solid barriers; lots of unmanned surveillance in the air, on the ground and at sea; lighter obstructions wherever needed; artificial intelligence analyzing trends and predicting pressure points; and, above all, a well-financed, highly motivated, all-volunteer Border Patrol force working with local law enforcement. Alongside that smart wall should be a regional effort to address root causes of migration—crime, drugs, corruption and failing rule of law—that includes the U.S. and Canada as well as our neighbors to the south.

In the course of my career, I've ordered our active-duty military into many legitimate missions in Latin American and the Caribbean, ranging from fighting insurgents in Colombia to counter narcotics throughout Central America to disaster relief following earthquakes in the Caribbean. Those were sensible, cost-effective missions. This one is not, and the President should reverse course.

Admiral Stavridis (ret.) was the 16th Supreme Allied Commander at NATO and is an operating executive at the Carlyle Group

Individual results may vary. Non-insulin • Once-weekly

With commercial insurance you may be eligible to pay as little as $25 for your monthly prescription.[d]

For adults with type 2 diabetes, along with diet and exercise, Ozempic® can help lower blood sugar

Oh! I could reach an A1C of less than 7?

Once-weekly Ozempic® is proven to significantly lower blood sugar.

In a one-year study, a majority of adults lowered their blood sugar and reached an **A1C of less than 7%** and maintained it.[a]

Adults with an average starting A1C of 8.1% who reached an A1C of less than 7%:

- 66% of people taking 0.5 mg Ozempic®
- 73% of people taking 1 mg Ozempic®
- 40% of people taking 100 mg Januvia®

While not for weight loss, Ozempic® may help you lose some weight.

In the same study, adults who took Ozempic® lost on average up to **12** pounds.[b]

People with an average starting weight of 197 pounds lost around:

- 9 pounds on 0.5 mg Ozempic®
- 12 pounds on 1 mg Ozempic®
- 4 pounds on 100 mg Januvia®

Ozempic® does not increase the risk of major cardiovascular (CV) events like heart attack, stroke, or death.[c]

What is Ozempic®?

Ozempic® (semaglutide) injection 0.5 mg or 1 mg is an injectable prescription medicine for adults with type 2 diabetes that along with diet and exercise may improve blood sugar.

- Ozempic® is not recommended as the first choice of medicine for treating diabetes.
- It is not known if Ozempic® can be used in people who have had pancreatitis.
- Ozempic® is not a substitute for insulin and is not for use in people with type 1 diabetes or people with diabetic ketoacidosis.
- It is not known if Ozempic® is safe and effective for use in children under 18 years of age.

Important Safety Information

Do not share your Ozempic® pen with other people, even if the needle has been changed. You may give other people a serious infection, or get a serious infection from them.

What is the most important information I should know about Ozempic®?

Ozempic® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Possible thyroid tumors, including cancer.** Tell your health care provider if you get a lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing, or shortness of breath. These may be symptoms of thyroid cancer. In studies with rodents, Ozempic® and medicines that work like Ozempic® caused thyroid tumors, including thyroid cancer. It is not known if Ozempic® will cause thyroid tumors or a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) in people.
- Do not use Ozempic® if you or any of your family have ever had MTC, or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2).

Do not use Ozempic® if:

- you or any of your family have ever had MTC or if you have MEN 2.
- you are allergic to semaglutide or any of the ingredients in Ozempic®.

Before using Ozempic®, tell your health care provider if you have any other medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had problems with your pancreas or kidneys.
- have a history of diabetic retinopathy.
- are pregnant or breastfeeding or plan to become pregnant or breastfeed. It is not known if Ozempic® will harm your unborn baby or passes into your breast milk. You should stop using Ozempic® 2 months before you plan to become pregnant.

Tell your health care provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbal supplements, and other medicines to treat diabetes, including insulin or sulfonylureas.

[a]In a large one-year study of 1231 adults with type 2 diabetes when Ozempic® or Januvia® was added to one or more diabetes pills.

[b]While many people in this medical study lost weight, some did gain weight.

[c]In a two-year study with 3297 people with type 2 diabetes who had a high risk of CV events and were taking their usual CV and diabetes medications were also treated once weekly with either a placebo or 0.5 mg or 1 mg doses of Ozempic®.

Important Safety Information (cont'd)

What are the possible side effects of Ozempic®?

Ozempic® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis).** Stop using Ozempic® and call your health care provider right away if you have severe pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting. You may feel the pain from your abdomen to your back.
- **changes in vision.** Tell your health care provider if you have changes in vision during treatment with Ozempic®.
- **low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).** Your risk for getting low blood sugar may be higher if you use Ozempic® with another medicine that can cause low blood sugar, such as a sulfonylurea or insulin. **Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include:** dizziness or lightheadedness, blurred vision, anxiety, irritability or mood changes, sweating, slurred speech, hunger, confusion or drowsiness, shakiness, weakness, headache, fast heartbeat, and feeling jittery.
- **kidney problems (kidney failure).** In people who have kidney problems, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting may cause a loss of fluids (dehydration), which may cause kidney problems to get worse. It is important for you to drink fluids to help reduce your chance of dehydration.
- **serious allergic reactions.** Stop using Ozempic® and get medical help right away if you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, including itching, rash, or difficulty breathing.

The most common side effects of Ozempic® may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach (abdominal) pain, and constipation.

Please see Brief Summary on adjacent page.

[d]Maximum savings of $150 per prescription for up to 24 months. Eligibility and other restrictions apply. Full program details and eligibility requirements available at OzempicSavings.com. Novo Nordisk reserves the right to modify or cancel offer at any time.

Ask your doctor about Ozempic®.

Learn more at Ozempic.com or call 1-833-OZEMPIC (1-833-693-6742).

ONCE-WEEKLY OZEMPIC® semaglutide injection 0.5mg|1mg

novo nordisk®

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Brief Summary of information about OZEMPIC® (semaglutide) injection

OZEMPIC®
semaglutide injection 0.5mg|1mg

Rx Only

This information is not comprehensive.

- Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist
- Visit www.novo-pi.com/ozempic.pdf to obtain the FDA-approved product labeling
- Call 1-888-693-6742

Do not share your OZEMPIC® pen with other people, even if the needle has been changed. You may give other people a serious infection, or get a serious infection from them.

Read this Medication Guide before you start using OZEMPIC® and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or your treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about OZEMPIC®?

OZEMPIC® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Possible thyroid tumors, including cancer.** Tell your healthcare provider if you get a lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing, or shortness of breath. These may be symptoms of thyroid cancer. In studies with rodents, OZEMPIC® and medicines that work like OZEMPIC® caused thyroid tumors, including thyroid cancer. It is not known if OZEMPIC® will cause thyroid tumors or a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) in people.
- Do not use OZEMPIC® if you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC), or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2).

What is OZEMPIC®?

OZEMPIC® is an injectable prescription medicine for adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus that:

- along with diet and exercise may improve blood sugar (glucose).
- OZEMPIC® is not recommended as the first choice of medicine for treating diabetes.
- It is not known if OZEMPIC® can be used in people who have had pancreatitis.
- OZEMPIC® is not a substitute for insulin and is not for use in people with type 1 diabetes or people with diabetic ketoacidosis.
- It is not known if OZEMPIC® is safe and effective for use in children under 18 years of age.

Do not use OZEMPIC® if:

- you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2).
- you are allergic to semaglutide or any of the ingredients in OZEMPIC®.

Before using OZEMPIC®, tell your healthcare provider if you have any other medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had problems with your pancreas or kidneys.
- have a history of diabetic retinopathy.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if OZEMPIC® will harm your unborn baby. You should stop using OZEMPIC® 2 months before you plan to become pregnant. Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to control your blood sugar if you plan to become pregnant or while you are pregnant.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if OZEMPIC® passes into your breast milk. You should talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby while using OZEMPIC®.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. OZEMPIC® may affect the way some medicines work and some medicines may affect the way OZEMPIC® works.

Before using OZEMPIC®, talk to your healthcare provider about low blood sugar and how to manage it. Tell your healthcare provider if you are taking other medicines to treat diabetes, including insulin or sulfonylureas.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

How should I use OZEMPIC®?

- OZEMPIC® is injected under the skin (subcutaneously) of your stomach (abdomen), thigh, or upper arm. **Do not** inject OZEMPIC® into a muscle (intramuscularly) or vein (intravenously).
- **Do not** mix insulin and OZEMPIC® together in the same injection.
- Change (rotate) your injection site with each injection. **Do not** use the same site for each injection.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about how to prevent, recognize and manage low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), high blood sugar (hyperglycemia), and problems you have because of your diabetes.

What are the possible side effects of OZEMPIC®?

OZEMPIC® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **See "What is the most important information I should know about OZEMPIC®?"**
- **inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis).** Stop using OZEMPIC® and call your healthcare provider right away if you have severe pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting. You may feel the pain from your abdomen to your back.
- **changes in vision.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have changes in vision during treatment with OZEMPIC®.
- **low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).** Your risk for getting low blood sugar may be higher if you use OZEMPIC® with another medicine that can cause low blood sugar, such as a sulfonylurea or insulin. **Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include:**
  - dizziness or light-headedness
  - blurred vision
  - anxiety, irritability, or mood changes
  - sweating
  - slurred speech
  - hunger
  - confusion or drowsiness
  - shakiness
  - weakness
  - headache
  - fast heartbeat
  - feeling jittery
- **kidney problems (kidney failure).** In people who have kidney problems, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting may cause a loss of fluids (dehydration) which may cause kidney problems to get worse. It is important for you to drink fluids to help reduce your chance of dehydration.
- **serious allergic reactions.** Stop using OZEMPIC® and get medical help right away, if you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction including itching, rash, or difficulty breathing.

The most common side effects of OZEMPIC® may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach (abdominal) pain and constipation.

Talk to your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of OZEMPIC®.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

Manufactured by: Novo Nordisk A/S, DK-2880 Bagsvaerd, Denmark
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The 401(k)'s midlife crisis

By William Birdthistle and Daniel Hemel

THE PROVISION THAT GIVES THE NAME OF AMERICA'S MOST popular retirement-savings plan, Section 401(k), turned 40 on Nov. 6, 2018. And in its first four decades, the 401(k) has lived an unexpectedly glamorous life. At the time of its enactment, lawmakers anticipated that it would exist in obscurity, affecting only a small number of corporate executives. Forty years later, 401(k) has become possibly the most famous section of the Internal Revenue Code, with well over 90 million Americans personally participating in 401(k)s or similar defined-contribution plans.

Section 401(k)'s rise from obscurity to ubiquity might suggest that its 40th birthday should be an occasion for celebration. But this is no time for popping corks. The provision has proven to be enormously expensive while also ineffective at helping most American workers save for retirement. In short, Section 401(k), passed as part of the 1978 Revenue Act, is facing something of a midlife crisis.

THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE REASONS lawmakers should reconsider the provision. The first is its sheer cost. At the time that Section 401(k) was enacted, Congress's Joint Committee on Taxation projected that Section 401(k) would have a "negligible effect upon budget receipts." Today, the tax expenditure associated with Section 401(k) and similar defined-contribution plans is more than $120 billion a year. That's almost four times the tax expenditure associated with the much debated mortgage-interest deduction.

A second reason to rethink Section 401(k) is its distributional effect. President Trump loves to ask—at least when the stock market has a good day—"How's your 401(k)?" The answer for most American workers is: "I don't have one." Most of the provision's benefits flow to households in the top fifth of all earners, while households in the bottom half of the income distribution capture less than 4% of the benefits generated by Section 401(k) and other defined-contribution plans.

A third reason to revisit Section 401(k) is its inefficiency—and, in particular, the fact that high administrative and management fees are eating up too much of Americans' nest eggs. According to a 2016 study, 401(k) participants pay an average fee equal to 0.97% of assets—well above the average expense ratio for mutual funds overall. Put another way, plan administrators and investment managers are taking 1¢ out of every dollar that Americans hold in their 401(k)s each year. That might not seem like a lot, but over time it adds up.

SO WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT? Ideally lawmakers would go back to the drawing board and overhaul America's labyrinthine system of tax-preferred retirement savings. What we have today is an alphabet soup of savings options—401(k)s, traditional and Roth IRAs, SEP IRAs for small-business owners and the self-employed, 403(b)s for employees of nonprofit organizations and more—all of which have extraordinarily complicated criteria for contributions, plan management and withdrawals.

A more modest—and perhaps more politically plausible—proposal would be to maintain Section 401(k) and its counterparts while expanding access to low-cost, tax-deferred savings vehicles. Perhaps the most promising means of accomplishing that end involves the Thrift Savings Plan, a defined-contribution plan already available to members of Congress and millions of other federal government employees. TSP participants can choose from a short menu of diversified index and target-date funds. The net expense ratio for plan participants is 0.033% of assets, or 3.3 basis points—a tiny fraction of what the average private-sector employee must pay.

Congress should grant all workers access to the Thrift Savings Plan platform. Call it "TSP for All," or—harking back to the Obamacare debates—a "public option" for retirement savings. The upshot would be that tens of millions of Americans—from Uber drivers to construction workers to retail clerks—could choose from the same menu of investment options already available to their elected representatives.

Whichever route Congress chooses will, concededly, cost money. Allowing individuals to defer taxes on savings-plan contributions almost certainly reduces revenue in the long run. One way to plug that gap would be to impose a modest excise tax on 401(k) and IRA contributions and withdrawals for high-income taxpayers—say, households earning more than $200,000 a year.

All of these ideas would require careful vetting before implementation. But if we are serious about ensuring retirement security for American workers, then the status quo is not a viable option. Let's use this anniversary as an opportunity for creative reappraisal and—ultimately—a catalyst for action. And by the time of Section 401(k)'s 50th birthday, hopefully we'll actually have something to celebrate.

$120 billion

The minimum estimated loss of annual tax revenue associated with Section 401(k) and similar defined-contribution plans

4%

The estimated percentage of benefits generated by Section 401(k) and other defined-contribution plans for households in the bottom half of the income distribution

1¢

The amount plan administrators and investment managers are taking out of every dollar that Americans hold in their 401(k)s each year

Birdthistle is a professor at Chicago-Kent College of Law and the author of Empire of the Fund: The Way We Save Now. *Hemel is an assistant professor at the University of Chicago Law School*

The midterms delivered a split decision

NATION

DIVIDED

that primes both parties for battle

BY MOLLY BALL

House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi at an election-night celebration

PHOTOGRAPH BY AL DRAGO

By the time Nancy Pelosi took the stage

at the Hyatt Regency in Washington on Election Day, it was nearly midnight and the panic had passed. After an evening of equivocal results and occasional heartbreak, the House Democratic leader was there to assure the cheering crowd that their party had won, and she was the proof: Democrats, she said, "have taken back the House for the American people!"

The message was met with relief more than triumph. Democrats had hoped the country would deliver a decisive verdict to President Trump and the Republicans, but it did not. Pelosi's party took the night's biggest prize, flipping about 30 GOP-held seats to take over the House of Representatives. Democrats won large majorities of women, young people and nonwhite voters, according to exit polls; ran up the score among voters with college degrees; and captured contests in historically Republican suburbs of cities like Richmond, Va., Chicago and Denver. They chipped away at the GOP's edge in governor's mansions, reclaimed the Rust Belt strongholds that put Trump in the White House and won the total vote by about 9 percentage points.

But a President who turned the election into a referendum on himself saw plenty to like in the results as well. The GOP gained ground in the Senate, easily defeating Democratic incumbents in Indiana, Missouri and North Dakota, states that Trump won in 2016 and that he campaigned in just days before the midterms. Much of the country's deep-red interior got redder, and Trump-hugging GOP candidates appeared to turn back strong challenges from talented Democrats—Beto O'Rourke in Texas, Stacey Abrams in Georgia, Andrew Gillum in Florida—who had vaulted to national celebrity.

Rather than a country rising up as one to rebuke the President and reverse 2016, the election showed an intensification of the trends that put Trump in office. The President's party typically loses ground in midterm elections because only the opposition is roused to anger. But these were not typical midterms: turnout surged to levels not seen in decades for a nonpresidential contest. In 2018 it wasn't only Democrats who were riled up—Republicans, too, came out at high levels, perhaps vindicating Trump's strategy of ginning up his core supporters with race-based and culture-war appeals. The nation didn't come together in agreement; it drew further apart. America remains, as Trump revealed it to be two years ago, an angry and divided country whose citizens blame one another for its ills.

Now, for the first time in the Trump presidency, those two sides will square off in a divided government: voters elevated House Democrats to serve as a check on a scandal-plagued President and his party. While Pelosi called for bipartisanship

KEY BALLOT MEASURES

Statewide votes will shape policy for millions:

Marijuana

Michigan became the first Midwestern state to legalize recreational cannabis, while Missouri and Utah approved medicinal use of the drug.

Medicaid expansion

Utah, Nebraska and Idaho—all conservative states—approved measures expanding access to Medicaid to tens of thousands of low-income residents.

Republican Senate candidate Josh Hawley ousted Democratic incumbent Claire McCaskill in Missouri

in her election-night remarks, the Democrats are more likely to use their control of Congress's lower house—one-half of one-third of American federal government—to torment Trump. Already, incoming committee chairs are drawing up plans to investigate the President and his Administration, who in turn are bracing for everything from financial and influence-peddling probes to potential impeachment proceedings.

The midterms revealed the politics that will inform those battles. If the fight was ugly in a year when Trump's spot on the ballot was symbolic, the year to come will be much worse. The new congressional majority looks very different from the one that preceded it. For the first time in American history, more than 100 women may serve in the House, at least 31 of them newly elected and representing at least 19 districts Democrats wrested from Republicans. The Democratic caucus will include the youngest Congresswoman ever elected, 29-year-old Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York; two of the first Native American Congresswomen; and the two first Muslim Congresswomen. Texas elected two Latina Congresswomen, Iowa sent its first two women to the House, Massachusetts and Connecticut elected their first black Congresswomen, and Colorado gave a nod to the first openly gay governor in American history. Rookie African Americans defeated Republican incumbents in majority-white districts, from New York's Hudson Valley to exurban Chicago to conservative Dallas. But where only a third of congressional Democrats are projected to be white and male, the Republican Hill caucus is on track to be 90% white men.

The contrast sets up an even brighter divide in Washington. The Republicans who remain in Congress are the ones in the safest districts, who

Abortion

Alabama and West Virginia altered their constitutions to say women have no right to an abortion. (Alabama also granted protections to fetuses.) An Oregon measure to restrict abortion funding failed.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: REUTERS; THIS SPREAD: CHARLIE RIEDEL—AP/SHUTTERSTOCK; ILLUSTRATIONS BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN FOR TIME

hewed closest to Trump. They embody a party now tethered to Trump's polarizing message of racial provocation and stringent border security. The Democrats, for their part, rode to victory on a wave of anti-Trump grassroots fervor two years in the making. The Resistance is coming to Washington, where it will confront a thoroughly Trumpified GOP.

The Democratic army has its own seasoned field general in Pelosi, the once and ostensibly future Speaker who knows how to manipulate the levers of power in Washington as well as anyone. If the 78-year-old pol quashes the murmurs of rebellion in her ranks—at least nine new Democratic members have said they won't support Pelosi in expected elections scheduled for late November—this young, diverse, potentially unruly caucus will be led by the same figurehead of the past 15 years. In her victory speech, Pelosi vowed to "find common ground where we can, and stand our ground where we can't." Elections, she said, "are about the future." But as a new political fight opens in the Trump era, the future looks like a pitched battle between two starkly different versions of America.

WHEN ABIGAIL SPANBERGER took the stage at her victory party at the Westin hotel in Richmond, Va., among the crowd were the members of a group called the Liberal Women of Chesterfield County. In the days after Hillary Clinton's defeat, the group had formed as a kind of ad hoc postelection support group to talk through the disappointment of Trump's victory. It morphed into a political force that propelled Spanberger, a 39-year-old former CIA analyst, to Washington. Virginia's 7th District, which had been in GOP hands since 1971 and is represented by Tea Party poster boy Dave Brat, was not even on the party's radar of possible pickups in the House. When Spanberger eked out a victory by just after midnight Wednesday morning, it became clear that a wave was poised to wash away the House Republican majority.

The national Democratic rebellion took root in places like this: affluent communities with two-car garages and big-box stores, where educated suburban women recoiled at Trump's incendiary rhetoric and lined up behind candidates who looked and spoke like them. The progressive uprising was a leaderless movement built on a grassroots infrastructure that didn't exist two years ago. Perhaps the most powerful network, Indivisible, grew out of a Google doc of organizing guidelines thrown together by a few Democratic Hill staffers. It went up in mid-December 2016; by the end of January, it had been downloaded a million times.

NEW GOVERNORS

Races that captured national attention:

Georgia

In a contest marked by concerns over voter access, Democrat Stacey Abrams refused to concede to Republican **Brian Kemp,** saying the thin margin might require a runoff.

Kansas

Democrat **Laura Kelly** defeated Kansas secretary of state Kris Kobach, a close ally of President Trump's who has taken hard-line positions on voting restrictions and immigration.

Florida

Former Republican Congressman **Ron DeSantis,** a Trump acolyte, edged Democrat Andrew Gillum in one of the night's most anticipated races, dealing a blow to the rising Democratic star in the nation's largest swing state.

The clearest sign of the movement's power was the Women's March, when millions surged into the streets to protest Trump's ascension in likely the biggest single-day protest in American history. The marches drew crowds all over the country, but party bigwigs were so oblivious to the budding revolt that only one of the seven candidates for Democratic National Committee chair attended any of the protests. The rest had sequestered themselves at a conference for Democratic megadonors near Miami. In short order, many of the protesters formed local Indivisible groups aimed at using Tea Party–style tactics to pressure their local representatives. They stormed airports to protest Trump's travel ban, staged sit-ins at congressional offices over health care and flooded town halls to protest tax cuts. Six million people signed an online petition calling for Trump's impeachment. More than $1.6 billion in campaign donations was funneled to Democratic candidates through the online fundraising portal ActBlue. Volunteers used the tech-based Swing Left to knock on 2 million doors in the weekend before the election alone.

Even some of those who initially voted for Trump began to have second thoughts. "I believed what he said, his campaign promises, to make America great again," said Mary Joyce, a 55-year-old longtime Republican voter in the suburbs of Kansas City, Kans. "I feel he's made a sham of the office." In Joyce's district, Sharice Davids, a gay Native American lawyer and former mixed-martial-arts fighter, defeated a four-term moderate Republican Congressman. Kansas also rejected Republican gubernatorial candidate Kris Kobach, a Trump acolyte known for his crusades against illegal immigration and imagined voter fraud.

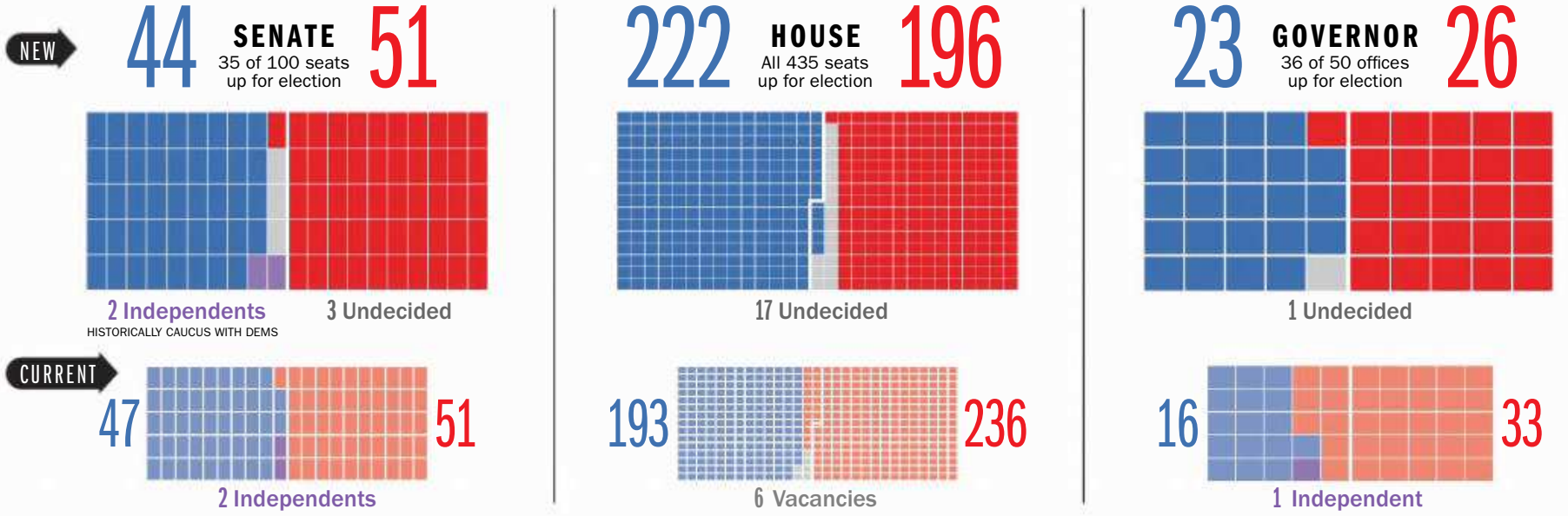
Kansas' was one of seven Republican-held governorships that Democrats won Nov. 6, including the Wisconsin seat held by Scott Walker, whom Democrats finally ousted in his bid for a third term. The Democrats flipped control of seven state legislative chambers, wins that will shape education and health care policies for millions of people and affect redistricting after 2020. In ballot referendums, three red states approved Medicaid expansion, three legalized marijuana for recreational or medicinal use, and two raised the minimum wage. Florida restored voting rights to more than a million felons, a move that could shape future elections in the nation's largest swing state.

Most notably, Democrats won back states that had been crucial to Trump's 2016 victory. In Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, Democratic Senate and gubernatorial candidates swept Republicans, shattering assumptions that Trump's 2016 victory had ushered in a permanent Rust Belt

GETTY IMAGES (6); ILLUSTRATIONS BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN FOR TIME

THE BREAKDOWN

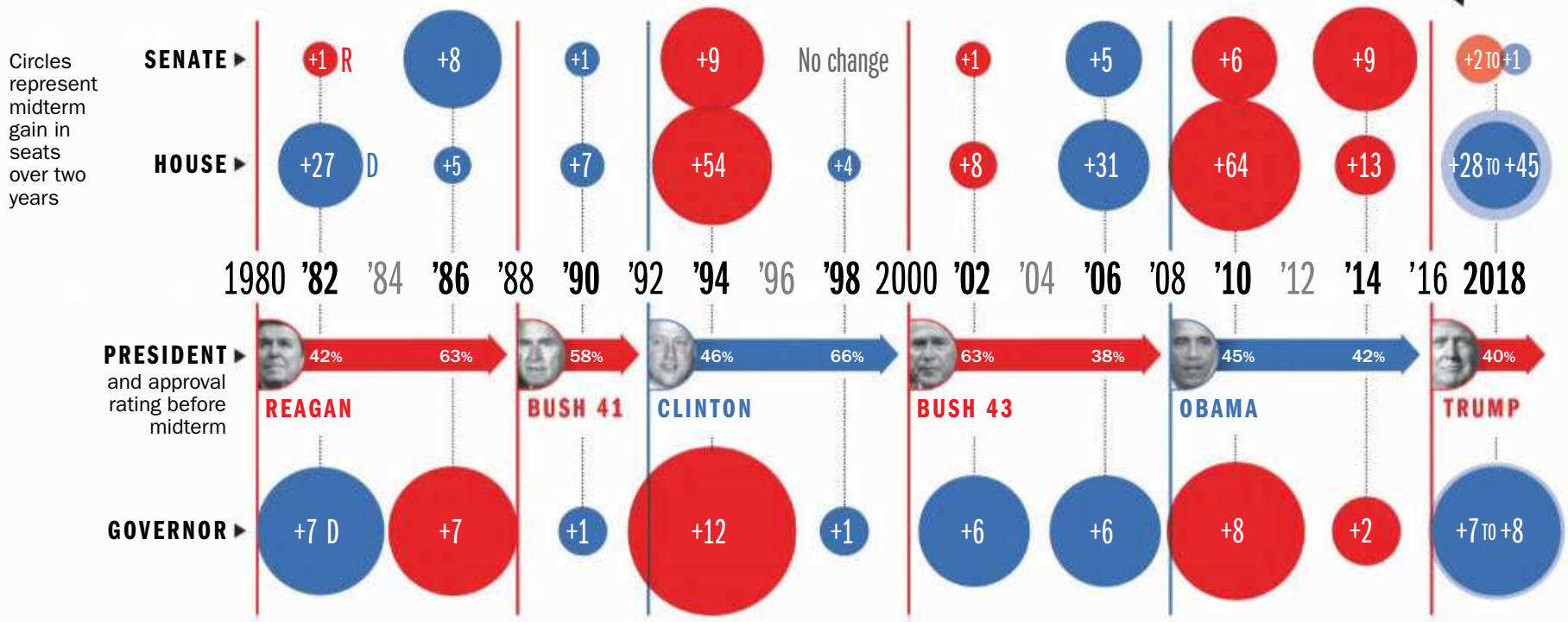
DEMOCRAT REPUBLICAN



The midterm curse

Historically, the President's party loses ground in nonpresidential elections.

Democrats made substantial gains in the House and gubernatorial races, but not in the Senate



NOTE: ELECTION RESULTS FROM AP AS OF 6 PM. NOV. 7. CIRCLE SIZES ARE PROPORTIONAL TO SIZE OF BODY THEY ARE IN. FOR EXAMPLE, A 6-SEAT GAIN IN THE SENATE IS PROPORTIONAL TO A 26-SEAT GAIN IN THE HOUSE AND A 3-SEAT GAIN IN GOVERNORS. GAIN IN SEATS DOES NOT INCLUDE INDEPENDENTS OR OTHER PARTIES. CONGRESSIONAL GAINS DO NOT NECESSARILY RESULT IN CONTROL OF THE CHAMBER.

SOURCES: AP; OFFICE OF THE CLERK, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; GALLUP; NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

realignment. In many of these races, Democrats eschewed a focus on Trump in favor of pocketbook issues. Chief among them was health care: nationally, polls showed it was voters' No. 1 issue. It figured in 57% of federal Democratic advertisements in October, a staggering reversal after years in which Democrats viewed Obamacare as a liability.

Ignoring Trump was a lesson Democrats learned from 2016: the way to win, most Democrats decided, wasn't to crusade against Trump but instead to relentlessly address local policy messages. In Wisconsin, Democratic Senator Tammy Baldwin coasted to re-election with a campaign that focused doggedly on the crisis afflicting the state's dairy farmers. In eastern Iowa, 29-year-old congressional candidate Abby Finkenauer beat a Republican incumbent with a message that emphasized the student-debt crisis. Democrats also adopted some of Trump's populism; two years after Clinton was pilloried for her ties to Goldman Sachs, more than 70% of Democratic congressional challengers in high-priority races trumpeted their refusal to accept corporate PAC donations.

16

Nonincumbent veterans elected Nov. 6, the most freshman vets since 2010. The number could rise as more races are called.

Senator Ted Cruz of Texas withstood a strong challenge from Democrat Beto O'Rourke

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRENT HUMPHREYS FOR TIME

Perhaps most important to the Democrats' victory was their attention to local political needs rather than adherence to a strict ideology. The party's winners spanned the ideological spectrum, from middle-of-the-road moderates to insurgent liberals like Massachusetts' Ayanna Pressley. Candidates like Harley Rouda in California forged a combination path, mixing pro-business rhetoric with support for single-payer health care.

WATCHING AT THE WHITE HOUSE, the President seemed to read the results as a victory that was all about him and his divisive approach to politics. Establishment Republicans had seen the President steamroll their professional politicians in 2016 with a message that emphasized banning Muslims and walling out immigrants rather than the traditional party platform of lower taxes and less regulation. The 2018 primaries, in which Republicans who broke with Trump lost to those who embraced him, made it clear the party and Trump are now effectively one.

Even if some Republicans had qualms about this, the party had little choice, given the way the President enthralled the base and dominated the news cycle. At an August meeting in the White House Map Room, two of Trump's top political advisers, Bill Stepien and Johnny DeStefano, presented him with a midterm plan—a proposed itinerary of political travel, fundraisers and rallies that would outpace the midterm campaign schedules of recent predecessors. They considered it an aggressive plan. But Trump wasn't satisfied. "There's not enough," he said. In the final six days of the campaign, he made 11 stops to activate the GOP base.

Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan urged him to focus on congressional accomplishments and the booming economy at his multiple campaign rallies. But the message was entirely overshadowed by darker ones. To confront a caravan of legal asylum seekers thousands of miles away, Trump sent more troops to the southern border than the U.S. has deployed to fight ISIS. He promised a undeliverable tax cut. He mocked the woman who'd accused Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh of sexual assault, and blamed the media for an attempted assassination of top Democrats by a pipe bomber, who was in fact a professed Trump acolyte. Rather than salve the nation's wounds after 11 Jews were gunned down in their Pittsburgh synagogue, he complained that the attack had stalled his political momentum. He tweeted about polls that didn't exist and warned that police would be on the lookout for voter fraud. "Pretend I'm on the ballot," he told voters at a rally in Southaven, Miss., in early October.

Supporters cheer Colorado's Jared Polis after he became the first openly gay person elected as a U.S. governor

GOP insiders reoriented to accommodate Trump, pointing the President to deep-red areas where he could drive up base turnout—an apparently successful effort that may have saved the party's candidates in Florida. At the same time, the GOP spent hundreds of millions of dollars trying to blunt the Democratic wave in suburban districts.

Trump watched the election returns late into the night Tuesday in the East Room of the White House, surrounded by his wife, advisers and three eldest children. Stepien delivered running updates on the results. Others, like longtime adviser Corey Lewandowski, told the President he had played a key role in delivering what they described as a major victory.

Trump happily absorbed that message, crowing about his influence on the trail in a press conference the morning after the vote. "It was a great victory," Trump said. The White House argued that, in historical terms, midterm losses were to be expected and Trump's were far less than in the two wave elections during Obama's tenure. They pointed to places like Florida and Ohio as proof that Trump had energized the party. And in case anyone missed

JASON CONNOLLY—AFP/GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATION BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN

the "with me or against me" message he had been driving since 2016, Trump listed those Republican candidates who had "decided for their own reason not to embrace" him, and offered mocking consolation for their losses.

For all Trump's confidence, however, the midterms have made many GOP insiders nervous. The country's increasingly young and diverse voters swung hard to Democrats on Election Day, while the people Trump motivates are getting older. The party can't afford to cede the suburbs. And these Republican operatives worry Trump's dark and divisive message will haunt the party in 2020 and long after.

FOR NOW, the action will shift to Capitol Hill, where two years of conflict lie ahead. The House GOP, purged of its moderate, swing-district members, will be even more ideological and Trump-loyal. In Iowa, a state Trump won by 9 points, two moderate Republicans lost to Democratic women, leaving anti-immigration zealot Steve King the lone Republican in the state's House delegation. Ryan's retirement leaves Kevin McCarthy, a Trump-friendly Californian, the favorite to lead the minority caucus.

NEW GOVERNORS

Wisconsin

Two-term Republican Scott Walker, who moved Wisconsin to the right by cutting taxes and curtailing unions, lost to Democrat **Tony Evers,** the state superintendent of public schools.

Ohio

Republican **Mike DeWine** defeated Democrat Richard Cordray, maintaining the GOP's hold on the governor's mansion in a crucial swing state.

Nevada

For the first time in 20 years, voters elected a Democratic governor, picking **Steve Sisolak** over the GOP's Adam Laxalt in a race that drew millions in outside spending.

The nature of the new Democratic majority may depend on who emerges as its leader. Many Democrats benefited from Pelosi's largesse in 2018, while many others have run as far from her as possible. The party is scheduled to hold a secret-ballot vote at the end of November, and despite widespread grumbling, no one has yet announced a challenge to Pelosi. If she gets the gavel back, she has a track record as a disciplined and effective Speaker, adept at corralling her diverse crew through persistence, favors and fear.

Lawmakers and aides say the new House majority's theme will be accountability, starting with legislation that includes campaign-finance reform, voting rights and ethics—a reprise of Pelosi's approach the last time she took control from Republicans in 2006. The bills are still being drafted, but Democrats expect to introduce several early in the new Congress. Other legislative priorities include infrastructure and combatting rising prescription-drug prices, ideas some Republicans also support.

Despite these legislative ambitions, the new Democratic majority is poised to spend the bulk of its time blocking GOP priorities and holding the Trump Administration's feet to the fire, according to Pelosi and others. Multiple House committees plan to use their subpoena power in an attempt to curb what they say is rampant corruption. The effort will be led by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. "We need to get in there and see what's happening," says Maryland Representative John Sarbanes, who sits on the Oversight Committee. "Our job is to put the information in front of the American people."

Many of the investigations are likely to center on the President and his family. Among the possible targets: his finances, including a subpoena for his long-hidden tax returns; his son-in-law Jared Kushner's security clearances; and the entanglements of the Trump Organization, which the President declined to place in a blind trust and which Democrats allege he has used to profit from his office. Party elders have urged restraint. "What I've been telling my Democratic colleagues and friends is that they have a responsibility to use the oversight powers responsibly, in a credible way," says former Representative Henry Waxman, who led Democrats on the Oversight Committee for over a decade. "If they abuse those powers, they will have no credibility."

Beyond the White House, Democrats see a target-rich environment in the Trump cabinet. Numerous departments have been rocked by scandal, from the Environmental Protection Agency to Housing and Urban Development. Even the Census,

overseen by the Commerce Department, is under the microscope. "The waste, fraud and abuse is plain to see," says Representative Elijah Cummings, the likely Oversight Committee chair, "and the most important thing for the Oversight Committee to do is to use its authority to obtain documents and witnesses, and actually hold the Trump Administration accountable to the American people."

And then there's the big one: the Russia probe. Under Republican leadership, the House Intelligence Committee split along partisan lines and preemptively pronounced the matter closed. Special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation hasn't ended and could soon produce a report on its findings. For now, Pelosi has discouraged talk of impeachment, pointing out that she resisted Democratic pressure to impeach George W. Bush a decade ago, but she has acknowledged that the Mueller report could change her mind.

The Democratic base already supports impeachment. Tom Steyer, the megadonor who spent millions on TV ads promoting an impeachment drive, says he'll continue to pressure his party. "The actual remedy in the Constitution is to impeach the President when you have a lawless President," he says. The White House has been preparing for this likelihood. Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani has openly acknowledged that Trump's complaints about the Russia "witch hunt" are aimed at poisoning public opinion so that any impeachment effort is seen as a purely political affair. Republicans in the Senate, Giuliani argues, will be pressured by their base to oppose impeachment, no matter what facts come out.

One longtime Trump ally who will no longer be in the middle of the fight is his Attorney General, Jeff Sessions. Just 90 minutes after his triumphant press conference, Trump tweeted that he had removed Sessions, setting up a battle on the Hill to confirm a replacement who will be charged with protecting the independence of the Justice Department from political meddling and the work of the Mueller probe as it closes in on a final report.

Heading into the final two years of Trump's first term as President, the situation could hardly be more fraught. Democrats and Republicans are as mobilized and divided as they have been in a generation. The House is now controlled by Trump's ardent opponents. A potential constitutional crisis looms. And the stakes for the presidency, American justice and the country as a whole just keep going up. —*With reporting by* ALANA ABRAMSON/NASHVILLE; CHARLOTTE ALTER/BLOOMFIELD, MICH.; BRIAN BENNETT/HOUSTON; TESSA BERENSON/BOZEMAN, MONT.; PHILIP ELLIOTT/DALLAS; *and* ABBY VESOULIS/WASHINGTON ◻

ANALYSIS

A PINK WAVE CRASHES ON THE CAPITOL

BY CHARLOTTE ALTER

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, HALEY Stevens and Lauren Underwood have been sending each other lots of emojis. Both were first-time female candidates running in Republican-held districts, part of a nationwide surge of Democratic novices making their way in politics. But as young women running to serve in a Congress dominated by older men, they knew they each needed a little boost. "Enjoy the feeling, because you DID IT!!" Underwood, 32, texted Stevens, 35, after her August primary, followed by more words of solidarity and a yellow heart. "Keep fighting. Keep going. We are going to change the world!" Stevens texted Underwood last month.

On Nov. 6, Stevens, who served on President Barack Obama's auto task force, sailed to victory in Michigan's 11th District. Underwood, a registered nurse and former Health and Human Services official, scored an upset in Illinois's 14th District. They're among a record 84 Democratic women who helped their party take back the House of Representatives, even as votes are still being counted in more than a dozen key races. And while some of the big Democratic wins came from experienced leaders, like Michigan Governor-elect Gretchen Whitmer and Kansas Governor-elect Laura Kelly, at least 30 Democratic House victories were won by candidates like them: political rookies, running for Congress for the first time.

For many of these newcomers, election night was the culmination in a series of personal transformations: from citizen to gadfly, from gadfly to candidate, from candidate to duly elected representative of the American people.

Like all meaningful transformations, this one required persistent struggle. The day after Donald Trump's Inauguration, millions surged into the streets for the Women's March, the biggest single-day protest in U.S. history. Soon, many of those same women formed local groups to use Tea Party–style tactics to pressure their representatives: thousands of Indivisible chapters were formed around the country, with a

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membership that's roughly 70% female. In mid-2017, as the Republican legislature attempted to repeal the Affordable Care Act, women-led activists made hundreds of thousands of phone calls to their representatives. By September 2018, more than 42,000 women had reached out to Emily's List, the fundraising organization for Democratic women, about running for office, and 356 female Democrats had filed paperwork to run for Congress. One hundred and twenty Republican women also filed to run.

By Election Day, 183 Democratic women were on the ballot for the House. Lawyer and former mixed-martial-arts fighter Sharice Davids, who won a conservative Kansas district, will be one of the first Native American women in Congress and the first openly gay person to represent Kansas. Jahana Hayes, a former high school history teacher and 2016 Teacher of the Year, became the first black woman to represent Connecticut in the House. "That story is not possible in every country," Underwood says. "It's possible here."

1. Ilhan Omar, 36
Won in Minnesota, will be one of two Muslim women in Congress

2. Abby Finkenauer, 29
Beat a GOP incumbent in Iowa's 1st District

3. Sharice Davids, 38
Will be one of the first Native American women in Congress

4. Haley Stevens, 35
Won a Michigan district vacated by a Republican

In Georgia, domestic workers contacted more than 500,000 voters and sent nearly 1.5 million text messages in support of Stacey Abrams, whose nail-biter bid to become the nation's first African-American female governor may require a runoff.

The political infrastructure that pushed those candidates over the line may last, as the grassroots groups turn their attention to pressuring their new representatives on issues like health care and paid family leave. Women now make up about 38% of the Democratic caucus, according to Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

Stevens addressed supporters late Nov. 6 after spending most of the night playing Scrabble with her mother as returns poured in. "We just elected the first woman to Congress in Michigan's 11th District," she said to jubilant applause in a hotel ballroom in Birmingham, Mich. "I am the daughter of a fabulous mother," she said, choking up for the first time. "And make no mistake about it, we are the defenders of our democracy." ◻

OMAR: STEPHEN MATUREN—GETTY IMAGES; FINKENAUER: EILEEN MESLAR—TELEGRAPH HERALD/AP; DAVIDS: JIM LO SCALZO—EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK; STEVENS: ERIN KIRKLAND FOR TIME

THE FIGHT FOR THE SOUL OF CHINA

IT'S MIXED MARTIAL ARTS AGAINST THE KUNG FU ESTABLISHMENT

BY CHARLIE CAMPBELL/BEIJING

PHOTOGRAPH BY PATRICK WACK FOR TIME

Mixed-martial-arts fighter Xu Xiaodong, photographed in his gym in Beijing on Sept. 11

FIGHTERS AREN'T USUALLY THE BLUSHING TYPE. But Xu Xiaodong can't hide his embarrassment when asked about his latest battle scar, a three-inch crimson railroad track that snakes over his right eyebrow. It was caused, he says, by an overzealous opponent's knee at a recent training session, during which Xu grappled with four younger mixed-martial-arts (MMA) fighters in quick succession. "I was tired by the end and bam!" Xu tells TIME in his Beijing gym. "Twenty-six stitches!"

It's by far the most obvious of the 40-year-old's war wounds, eclipsing even cauliflower ears and a catalog of creaking bones. But it's nowhere near the deepest. Xu has spent a lifetime fighting, first at school and later channeling a red-hot adolescent temper into competitive MMA. But the fiercest blows he suffered were far from the ring, when he took on practitioners of traditional Chinese martial arts, known officially as wushu but more colloquially as simply kung fu.

The dispute started with an argument on social media. Xu wanted Wei Lei, a kung fu master in the discipline of tai chi, to account for the outlandish powers he claimed to possess. Wei boasted of using an invisible force field to keep a dove on his hand, and pulverizing a watermelon's innards without damaging its skin. The idea that masters of kung fu achieve mystical skills is widely accepted in China; Wei is just one of many making such claims. Xu believes this "fake kung fu" sullies true martial arts. The online quarrel escalated, and before long Xu and Wei were facing off in a basement in the central Chinese city of Chengdu for a bare-knuckle match. Xu says he only wanted to open people's eyes, but the bout was billed as East vs. West, the master of a hallowed tradition vs. an alien upstart.

In the video of the April 27, 2017, bout that later went viral on social media, Xu takes a standard MMA striking pose. Wei shuffles to and fro with both arms raised like a praying mantis. After sizing each other

up for a few seconds, Xu advances, furiously hurling punches at Wei's head. The tai chi master instantly tumbles onto the checkerboard matting. Xu leaps forward and rains down blows on his opponent until the referee stops the fight. Victory had taken 20 seconds.

The bout left Xu with barely a scratch but a life in tatters. The video quickly became a viral sensation on China's social-media platforms. Online trolls accused Xu of humiliating traditional Chinese culture, and he found he was banned from social media. The Chinese Wushu Association condemned the "suspected illegal actions that violate the morals of martial arts." He and his family received death threats.

Many wanted a rematch. One aggrieved Chinese entrepreneur offered $1.45 million to any fighter who could defeat Xu. Other tai chi practitioners began challenging Xu both online and in person, setting up camp outside the MMA gym in Beijing that he manages. Some brazenly wandered in to pick fights.

Xu insists his aim was not to disparage Chinese martial arts, but to show that what is often sold as a powerful fighting skill is useless in actual close combat situations. But his efforts were framed by his critics as placing the Western culture of MMA above cherished Eastern traditions—a perfidious sin in an increasingly nationalist China. President Xi Jinping has made reviving traditional Chinese culture a signature policy, deploying kung fu to boost the nation's "soft power" overseas. Now, here was a man apparently dedicated to exposing it as a fraud.

"A lot of people have been brainwashed by these fake kung fu masters," says Xu, who broke his silence to talk to TIME. "I'm trying to wake them up and let them know what real traditional kung fu actually is."

In footage posted on social media, Xu squares up to Wei (top); *20 seconds later, the fight is over* (bottom)

THE SUPPOSEDLY 4,000-YEAR-OLD ROOTS of kung fu can still be glimpsed in China's Henan province, home of the fearsome fighting monks of Shaolin Buddhism. Dating from A.D. 495, the Shaolin temple is perched on the west side of the forested Mount Songshan, one of China's so-called five Sacred Mountains.

According to legend, the monastery's fighting prowess evolved from perfecting household chores like sweeping, fetching buckets of river water and collecting firewood. Feuding warlords would eagerly petition the warrior monks' help for their bloody campaigns. Even after the Shaolin temple was routed for subversive activities during the Qing dynasty, its influence spread as its monastic diaspora journeyed across the Middle Kingdom and as far as Japan.

Today, life inside the temple begins before daybreak, when the hundred resident monks shuffle into the central shrine to perform a 5 a.m. ritual. Kneeling before golden statues of the Buddha, they chant melodic rites accented by drum and cymbal, beneath bronze effigies of the order's iconic warrior brethren.

Later, the tourists arrive and the monks get to work. Novices put on kung fu shows where they tumble through the air, shatter metal bars over skulls and bend wooden spears with throats. Lithe performers adopt animalistic fighting styles, like monkey, leopard and leaping bullfrog. The reputation of the Shaolin monks has traveled far and wide; organizations using its name are all across China and the world. There are now around 140 Shaolin schools in 70 nations, according to local media.

In the U.S. kung fu entered the culture in the 1960s and '70s, partly due to Bruce Lee, the U.S.-born actor and martial artist who starred in cult movies *Enter the Dragon* and *Fist of Fury*. His popularity helped pave the way for actors like Jackie Chan and Jet Li to turn kung fu expertise into Hollywood stardom. In the 1990s, hip-hop group the Wu-Tang Clan littered their music with references to the Shaolin temple and samples from Chinese kung fu movies.

But kung fu's cultural reputation has taken a

LINUS JI/YOUTUBE (2)

battering with the rise of MMA, and in particular the Ultimate Fighting Championship. The first UFC tournament in 1993 was billed as pitting different martial art styles against one another, featuring experts in kung fu, karate, wrestling and even sumo. In the end, Brazilian jujitsu reigned supreme.

A quarter of a century later, MMA rivals boxing in global popularity, augmented by the booming celebrity of stars like Conor McGregor and Ronda Rousey. Many fans prefer the intensity of the format and stripped-down rules. Brazilian jujitsu, Thai kickboxing and wrestling remain the pillars of MMA fighting. The fluid acrobatics of wushu barely feature.

In China, kung fu remains a powerful draw. A study by Chinese Internet giant NetEase estimated the wushu industry's worth at billions of dollars, including film, television, education, tourism and retail. Its official association boasts of 2 million full-time students at 12,000 academies. But MMA is catching up, with several rival promotions vying for supremacy. When Canadian MMA fighter Vaughn "Blud" Anderson moved to Beijing in 2008, there were maybe five MMA contests all year. Now there can be 10 in a weekend. "It's growing faster here than anywhere else in the world," he says.

Shaolin temple abbot Shi Yong Xin tells TIME kung fu can't be compared to MMA because its true essence is spiritual rather than simply physical, bringing not superpowers but inner peace. But many people in China still give credence to the idea that the most skilled practitioners have supernatural abilities, and there's no shortage of self-styled masters willing to go along with the ruse. A quick glance on YouTube reveals kung fu masters with claims of telekinesis and "shamanic dances that open up other realms of existence." Some make money by promising to train others, and many have passionate disciples; the defeated Wei, for example, has 94,000 followers on China's Twitter-like microblog Weibo.

The Shaolin temple itself is not free of commercialization. As the monks practice before rapt audiences, hawkers brandish DVDs. Shi himself has a gold-embossed business card with no less than three QR codes on it. But he says crooked kung fu practitioners and teachers often use the temple's name without permission. "I had one worker who wasn't even a monk but quit and started his own Shaolin school," he says bitterly.

So Shi backs Xu's campaign to rid kung fu of deceptive practitioners, like the female tai chi master who claims she can repel 12 opponents without using her hands. "He's a good guy, even though he's a totally amateur MMA fighter," Shi says, before quipping to a fellow monk that "a hundred people in Henan province alone" could defeat Xu. But overall, concedes the abbot, "Xu is doing the right thing by fighting fake kung fu."

Xu's battle is increasingly a lonely one, however, as the Chinese government is weaponizing kung fu for its own propaganda purposes. This year, the Shaolin temple controversially flew the Chinese national flag for the first time, illustrating its "patriotic" credentials under the auspices of the all-powerful Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Jackie Chan, the Hong Kong–born actor among the most beloved icons in kung fu, became a political adviser to the party in 2013 and now regularly appears on its behalf.

In this context, it's easy to see why Xu weathered such a backlash. His mission to expose unscrupulous kung fu masters was a threat to the cultural outreach of the CCP. The idea that kung fu is unique, with perhaps otherworldly elements, gives it popular currency that sets it apart from Western combat skills. "Everybody thinks that in Shaolin there's some secret knowledge that nobody wants to teach to others, especially the 'evil foreigners,'" says Marta Neskovic, 26, a Serbian doctorate student who's training at the temple for her fieldwork on Shaolin kung fu.

Even veterans of other forms of pugilism believe. "I know Chinese MMA fighters who believe there are kung fu experts who live in mountain caves and can disappear and reappear at will," says Anderson. He suspects ancient kung fu morphed toward the cabalistic because modern weaponry was making hand-to-hand combat less relevant. "It just isn't efficient as a form of full-contact combat with a resisting opponent," he says. "Bullfrog kung fu cannot be what defended the empire."

'XU IS DOING THE RIGHT THING BY FIGHTING FAKE KUNG FU.'

SHI YONG XIN, abbot of the Shaolin temple

PROVING THAT to nationalistic Chinese will be difficult, but Xu has dedicated himself to trying. After his defeat of Wei, police stopped a second bout against tai chi master Ma Baoguo, and the mounting opprobrium forced Xu to retreat from public gaze.

Yet he can claim a partial success. In November 2017, China's General Administration of Sport issued a directive apparently in response to Xu's bout with Wei, clamping down on self-appointed masters and demanding practitioners "build correct values about martial arts." But it also banned unauthorized fights, in a bid to stifle debate about the relative merits of traditional and modern martial arts. On Nov. 5, Xu heard he was barred "indefinitely" from organizing tournaments for fighters at his gym.

Nevertheless, Xu is continuing his personal campaign. In April, he fought and defeated kung fu master Ding Hao in under two minutes, and he's planning another bout against what he says will be three "top, top" kung fu masters in a single day. He hopes that each victory will stifle his dissenters and restore normality to his life. Defeat isn't an option, he says. "I cut their way of making money by exposing them," he says. "So I cannot stop, as then the whole weight of pressure will come crushing down on me. I have no choice but to keep on fighting." —*With reporting by* ZHANG CHI/BEIJING ◻

CINDY ECKERT IS BETTING THAT A PILL CAN BOOST

SELLING DE

A WOMAN'S SEX DRIVE. SCIENTISTS AREN'T SO SURE

BY BELINDA LUSCOMBE

THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT about pink. One is that it is the color of bubble gum and Barbie. Cindy Eckert's view is that it is the color of business. It is a dominant presence at the offices of her Raleigh, N.C., venture-capital firm, the Pink Ceiling, a fund that advertises its main goal as "to make women really f-cking rich." It's an even more dominant presence on Eckert, who defies people to observe the taboo on assessing anyone—especially a woman—by their clothes. She wears some hue of pink every working day, accessorized with hot pink nails, lipstick and shoes. Even her hair seems to have a fuchsia sheen. In the pharmaceutical circles in which Eckert operates, among the white coats and the navy suits, that shade of pink invites judgment. And underestimation. She is fine with that.

Through the firm's "Pinkubator," Eckert, 45, is helping bring to market such innovations as a flushable pregnancy test, a decal that can detect a rape drug from a drop of a drink, shelf-stable human milk products for babies and a device that helps train pelvic-floor muscles.

These are not just products for women; they're products that give women more autonomy and, in particular, more agency over their bodies and sexual choices. And their development is being funded by Eckert's controversial attempt to answer one of the biggest mysteries of the human body: What is the source of female desire?

In August 2015, when she was Cindy Whitehead, Eckert got the drug Addyi, a (pink) pill engineered to rev up the sex drive of premenopausal women, approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Within a week, the pharmaceutical giant Valeant bought the drug's owner, Sprout Pharmaceuticals, a company Eckert had started with her then husband Robert Whitehead. It paid $1 billion. Eckert, now divorced, is using her share of this windfall to try to bottle lightning again, to develop and market products that others overlook because they're by or for women.

At least, that's her story.

There's another story that her critics, most of whom are women, like to tell, in which Eckert's brand of hyperfeminized

PHOTOGRAPH BY NATALIE KEYSSAR FOR TIME

SIRE

Sprout CEO Eckert promotes sexual agency for women, but her marquee product raises a feminist conundrum

pink power is razzle-dazzle and hucksterism. They believe that flibanserin, the generic name for Addyi, which had been turned down twice by the FDA, should never have been approved. One of her critics goes so far as to compare Eckert to Elizabeth Holmes, the now disgraced head of blood-testing company Theranos.

The drug approaches sex by altering the most relevant organ. Unlike Viagra, which has physiological effects on men's genitals, Addyi works on the brain; it was originally researched to treat depression. Flibanserin increases production of dopamine (the neurotransmitter that governs motivation and anticipation) and regulates serotonin (which governs self-consciousness and mood). Eckert points to brain scans that suggest these are the systems that are malfunctioning in women who have hypoactive sexual desire disorder (HSDD), the otherwise unexplained loss of libido that Addyi is marketed to treat.

But the science of desire—women's or men's—is very much up for debate. Not everyone agrees that HSDD is a disease. "These are theoretical speculations that have been grabbed onto by a desperate sexologist and desperate pharmaceutical-industry people who want to find more certainty in a very murky area," says Leonore Tiefer, a therapist, researcher and educator who opposed the approval of flibanserin. "There's no measure of this dopamine-serotonin model speculation."

Indeed, if the biological mechanisms behind women's desire are poorly understood, the role of neurobiology is even less so. According to Rosemary Basson, director of the University of British Columbia's Sexual Medicine Program, many people actually feel desire only *after* they have started making love. There is no benchmark amount of sex drive against which women can measure theirs. "[The pharmaceutical] industry wants that easy desire typical of early relationships that seems to be innate … to be the 'normal' state and to find a drug that will replicate that," Basson told TIME in an email. In June, an article in the *Archives of Sexual Behavior,* the most respected journal in the field, surmised that "research has not conclusively demonstrated that biology is among the primary mechanisms involved in inhibiting sexual desire in women." If the problems aren't biological, then medication is unlikely to work.

Eckert brushes off her learned naysayers. She has never shied from conflict. In fact, in 2017 she sued Valeant, from which she had been fired, for mishandling the drug's launch. To settle the suit, in November 2017, the company simply gave back to Eckert the drug for which it had paid $1 billion two years before. For free. It threw in a $25 million loan to help her with the relaunch. Why? Partly to get rid of a dead weight. Addyi made less than $10 million last year. By comparison, Viagra has never had less than $1 billion in annual sales.

THE OTHER PILL

Flibanserin, marketed as Addyi, is back in Eckert's hands

10%

Pharmacies that stocked Addyi after its launch, according to Eckert

80%

Addyi prescriptions that went unfilled in 2016, according to Valeant

32%

Women ages 18 to 59 who reported a problem with decreased sexual desire, in a 1999 study

HAVING WALKED AWAY with a huge payoff, Eckert is now back in the fray. Her plans are ambitious. She wants to use the Internet to circumvent the awkward interaction that a woman has with a doctor when the topic is sex and the need is for more of it. Instead, visitors to Addyi's website who give the right answers to a few queries—Would you like to increase your sexual desire? Why do you want to increase your sexual desire?—are directed to the Care XD website, where they are connected with a doctor. After a telemedicine conversation (a consultation over the phone or video chat), that doctor can prescribe Addyi to be delivered to the customer's door. Sprout is also lowering the price, from $800 per month to $400, or $99 if users don't have insurance. On Nov. 1, the pastel-shaded, millennial-friendly online mail-order pharmacy Hims launched Hers, a website for women's intimate needs, and is promoting Addyi heavily. "Given that men have 26 medications to address their sex drive," says Hers brand lead Hilary Coles, echoing Eckert's signature spiel closely, "we felt almost an obligation to give women an option."

This downsizing of the role of the doctor in prescribing flibanserin does not sit well with many in the field of sexual medicine. Given that the drug has the potential for serious side effects, including passing out (it comes with a black-box

JILLIAN CLARK

warning, the strictest of the FDA's caution labels, which advises users to abstain from "things that require clear thinking" for six hours), the dangers of taking it could outweigh potential benefits. Unlike Viagra, Addyi has to be taken every night, and its users should not drink alcohol. And nobody has revised the drug's tepid reviews: it didn't work for all women, and those for whom it worked reported having only one more "sexually satisfying event" every month.

But the Sprout CEO is undaunted. Visits to the website are up since the relaunch. There are now 20,000 certified Addyi subscribers in the U.S. The drug is about to launch in Canada, and Eckert is working on Europe. Sprout has submitted new alcohol-interaction studies to the FDA. "People have said to me, Why are you such a crusader in this? Nobody's going to lose their life," she says. "And my answer to them is, they may well lose their life as they know it."

One big change since the drug's first launch is the nature of the discussion about women's sexual agency. The #MeToo movement lifted a prohibition on talking about intimate experiences, especially acknowledging negative ones. That may play in Addyi's favor. Eckert uses the language of the movement in her pitch. "We will pick up the much needed and long overdue conversation" about sexual-desire disorders in women, she says, and get past "the shameful silence of feeling it's taboo societally to talk about what [women] are dealing with." Expecting women to have sex when they don't feel desire, she says, sounds like "the Harvey Weinstein defense."

Her critics counter that Addyi treats a standard female condition—almost a third of women ages 18 to 59 report a problem with decreased sexual desire—as if it were a disease and makes women feel dysfunctional just for being women. Others say low desire is much more likely to be caused by underlying psychological issues—including poor body esteem, relationship difficulties and a lack of sexual agency—and should not be pathologized. They make their own #MeToo case: that women have the right to say no to sex without being thought of as abnormal or in need of fixing.

Eckert argues that the drug is prescribed only to women for whom the absence of desire is a burden. "The hallmark characteristic [of HSDD] is distress," she says. "I saw women who'd lost their sense of self—they had in many cases lost marriages over this, because when things deteriorate in the bedroom they break down over the breakfast table too. And I struggle to understand objection to women having choice. If she doesn't want it, she doesn't take it. It's her call."

None of this dissuades her detractors from their belief that Eckert is no champion of women. Before founding Sprout, she and Whitehead marketed a long-acting testosterone implant known as Testopel. Their techniques drew a warning from the FDA, which said that in a pitch to doctors they had overstated the drug's benefits, understated its risks and promoted unauthorized uses. The material was quickly amended, Eckert says, and had been sent to only 150 M.D.s. (She and Whitehead are both still investors in Sprout. Eckert is engaged to another entrepreneur, Justin Miller, whose current product is premade cookie mixes for dogs.)

But it's not as if sex therapists don't have a financial stake here either, if their clients can be cured by medication. One user, Michelle Wilson, 47, of Florida, who has been on Addyi for 20 months, says she never even considered trying therapy, because her lack of desire arrived with menopause and felt to her like a physical issue. "You have to have a need or urge or want," she says. "A sex therapist is not going to help you in having that desire on your own." A tapering-off of libido after menopause is generally considered to be normal, not a case of HSDD. Nevertheless, since starting on Addyi, which she takes every other day, Wilson's sexual frequency has increased from once a month, she says, to at least once a week.

Given testimonials like that, Eckert and her investors believe that Addyi failed the first time not because it didn't work but because it was mishandled by Valeant, which became mired in a price-gouging scandal that led to the exit of the CEO within months of its acquisition of Addyi. The corporate turmoil might have been a distraction that undercut the product's launch. "Valeant went through an extraordinary circumstance," says Eckert. "We don't have a picture yet of how Addyi will perform."

THE SCIENCE OF DESIRE—WOMEN'S OR MEN'S—IS VERY MUCH UP FOR DEBATE

IN SO MANY WAYS, Eckert is exactly the type of hero women need to change the way the culture talks about female sexuality: she's industrious, iconoclastic and stubborn. Her unwillingness to back down in the face of authority can be an asset. Her older brothers, Doug and Brian, tell the story of the year in Fiji she had to go to the principal's office instead of home-ec classes every day, because on the first day of school, when it was her turn to stand and talk about her father's job (he was the ambassador), she instead announced that the exercise was pointless. According to her brothers, this was to protect the girl next to her who didn't want to tell everyone her dad drove a taxi.

She knew something about the exercise her teacher didn't—that it was not a fun way for everyone to discuss their family. She understands the power of pink in a way others don't—that a bold color can be a camouflage. So it would be nice to think she had also stumbled onto the key to the puzzle of female desire—that it can be unlocked with a prescription.

But it could also be that Eckert, as her critics say, is using women's libido and sexual agency the way she uses color, to capture attention and sell. Either way, Eckert has picked a very difficult battle to win. "In the medical system, if I'm asked about sex I'm asked three questions," she says. "Are you sexually active? Do you want birth control? And do you want to be tested for STDs?"

She wants there to be one more: Are you satisfied? The answer to that question may not be found in a pill. ◻

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Tim Off

TRUE GRIT
Viola Davis stars in *Widows*, a heist film that ditches glitz for realism, and male thieves for female ones

INSIDE

THE NEW HARRY POTTER *PREQUEL,* FANTASTIC BEASTS, *HAS A SECRET OR TWO*

ANURADHA ROY'S GRIPPING NOVEL TELLS A CENTURY OF INDIAN HISTORY

HBO BETS BIG ON A DAZZLING ELENA FERRANTE ADAPTATION

PHOTOGRAPH BY DYLAN COULTER

MOVIES

A heist movie about more than the cash

By Eliana Dockterman

WIDOWS DECLARES ITS INTENTIONS EARLY. In the film's opening moments, a career thief named Harry (Liam Neeson) and his wife Veronica (Viola Davis) share a passionate, prolonged kiss. Director Steve McQueen then cuts quickly back and forth between their intimate embrace and the chaos of one of Harry's robberies as it goes awry. There's a violent shoot-out, and the crew is killed. Veronica and three other women are left widowed. It's a startling sequence—but the intensity of the kiss may surprise audiences more than the bloodshed.

"You don't see couples over 40 kissing like that onscreen," says Davis. "And you *definitely* don't see interracial couples kissing like that." The scene, she says, captures the stakes of the film. "It wakes people up to the fact that this isn't a typical action movie," she says. "They're not just going to be able to eat their popcorn and enjoy watching someone's head get blown off." There will be devastating consequences.

Widows is nominally a heist movie, following the bereft wives (Davis, Michelle Rodriguez and Elizabeth Debicki, plus Cynthia Erivo as a woman pulled into their midst) as they attempt to pull off a robbery to settle their late husbands' debts. They plot their scheme against the backdrop of a corrupt election between a political scion (Colin Farrell) and a crime boss (Brian Tyree Henry). And purely in that capacity, as a thriller, it's a great one. The picture surges forward with the speed of a mad getaway driver, and the twists along the way will give viewers heart palpitations. But *Widows* has grander ambitions than that. It's a grownup drama that tackles a host of serious issues—race, class, gender, politics, religion, violence, police brutality, grief—all while remaining ridiculously entertaining. "I wanted to get the biggest, broadest audience I could possibly get," says McQueen, "while at the same time not letting go of the things I believe in intellectually, philosophically, politically."

This might seem an unlikely move for McQueen, whose last film, the harrowing *12 Years a Slave,* earned him a Best Picture Oscar in 2014. But he fell in love with the British television series on which *Widows* is based at 13, as he sprawled in front of the television on his mother's spiral carpet in West London in the '80s. "Until then, I had been projecting myself on people like Sean Connery as James Bond," he says. "So I felt this kinship with these women who had to circumvent the stereotypes put upon them, just as I always had." For years he had wanted to update the story to tackle modern political issues.

McQueen recruited Gillian Flynn, author of *Gone Girl,* to co-write the movie. He told her he wasn't interested in making a crowd-pleasing film in the vein of *The Italian Job* or *Ocean's 11,* one that hinged on the aha moment when the ruse is revealed; instead, he wanted to use the formula as an engine to drive real human drama. Flynn didn't take much convincing. "I'm not a heist-movie person," Flynn admits. "I didn't want to write the safecracker and the tech person. I wanted to explore what it would actually look like for this group of women to come together by necessity."

From left: Rodriguez takes direction from McQueen, with Debicki and Davis

***WIDOWS* ISN'T** a rallying cry for female unity and empowerment. It's a story about women of different races and classes who chafe as they struggle to work together. And while they do find some common ground, building relationships isn't the point. "They bond over some things," says Erivo, who plays getaway driver Belle. "The two single moms both know what it's like to try to find someone to look after their kids while they go to work to make ends meet. The women of color have a certain understanding. But this doesn't have

PREVIOUS PAGE: GUARDIAN/EYEVINE/REDUX; WIDOWS: 20TH CENTURY FOX

to be *The Baby-Sitters Club* for them to pull this off."

Flynn's native Chicago proved the perfect setting. More than many other big cities in America, Chicago remains segregated. The Polish neighborhood, black neighborhood, Greek neighborhood and Hispanic neighborhood may all sit within a few stops on the L, but their residents rarely rub elbows. McQueen beautifully captures the racial and economic demarcations in a single shot: his camera follows a black car from the outside as it carries a white political candidate from a rally in the center of his primarily black district to his campaign headquarters on the edge of that same district. In just a few blocks, crumbling churches and empty storefronts give way to blossoming trees and towering mansions.

The script crackles with those tensions. When the wealthy Veronica first meets two of the other widows, Linda (Rodriguez) and Alice (Debicki), one of them incredulously asks, "You're Harry's wife? How did you two meet?" Later, when Veronica chastises Alice for being late to a meeting, Linda points out that the other women are juggling jobs and child care to survive: "Our lives are more complicated than yours."

Their struggle becomes even thornier when you consider that the widows aren't up against a stereotypical villain but rather endemic corruption. In Chicago, McQueen explains, everybody's "got a guy." Need Bears tickets? Your contractor's "got a guy." In the market for a new car? Your neighbor's "got a guy."

McQueen became obsessed with the phrase while touring the city alongside Flynn. The co-writers interviewed FBI investigators, criminals, community organizers and religious leaders—and everybody used that same language to describe their connections. "The whole city is about bending rules," says McQueen. "Across the board—African American, Polish, Hispanic—everyone was saying it. Even the police were saying it."

That ethos rules the world of *Widows*. "I wanted to capture the incestuousness of Chicago," says Flynn. As alliances are made and betrayed, the violence grows increasingly brutal. But the most horrific moments don't feel sensational—they pass in a flash. "What's savage and shocking is the speed and efficiency of it," says Debicki.

IN CASTING THE FILM, McQueen avoided Hollywood glamour—he wanted to reflect the real women in the audience. He auditioned more than 100 women but couldn't fill the role he eventually offered to Rodriguez. At first, the actor refused the part. She saw the character—a mother who married young, had two kids with the wrong guy and is left to pick up the pieces—as a victim.

"I didn't see the female empowerment in soft power. It was an all-too-familiar tale of poverty in an urban environment. I've lived that life—why would I want to portray it?" she says. "Steve challenged me on that. The character reminds me of my mother. So why do I judge her? Why do I see that character as weak? The fear became an opportunity."

She worked out some of those thoughts in the rehearsals with the other actors. The four women sat together talking, Davis says, about what it is to be a woman in the world—"to not be in control of your life, to have people label you, to be told you're not pretty enough, to be told you're nothing without a man." The conversations bonded them. "We refused to label each other as the world had always labeled us," Davis says.

In *Widows,* as in life, people judge one another on the basis of race, class and gender. Those assumptions can set characters on different paths or limit their life choices. The smartest characters in the story use other people's assumptions about them to their advantage. At one point, Veronica tasks Alice, a Polish-American woman who has been abused by both her mother and her husband, with buying guns for the group. Alice makes her way to a gun show, where she persuades a firearms enthusiast that she's a mail-order bride in need of three Glocks. "She literally uses the thing that's been the muzzle and held her back her whole life, the idea of being this beaten housewife, and spins this story," says Debicki.

'You don't see couples over 40 kissing like that onscreen, and you definitely don't see interracial couples kissing like that.'

VIOLA DAVIS

She says the scene draws laughs in every screening. Yes, it's a sharp bit of commentary about our perceptions of female fragility and how easy it is to buy a gun in this country. But it's also just fun to watch Debicki swing a bag of handguns over her shoulder and celebrate her triumph with a hot dog.

It's a subtle victory when true change for women can feel, at times, unreachable. Even within the movie, an undue amount of the widows' energy is expended just fending off despair as they grieve and figure out how to move forward with their lives. But born from that adversity is a determination to survive. "I love Wonder Woman, but these women don't have a golden lasso sitting in the closet," says Davis. "They're real. They struggle. But they've woken up to the fact that they gave their lives over to their husbands. And now they have to take ownership back." ☐

MOVIES

The secret to a successful sequel? It's a secret

By Kate Samuelson

Up to their old tricks: Tina (Katherine Waterston) and Newt (Eddie Redmayne) in The Crimes of Grindelwald

SWEARING THE ENTIRE CAST AND CREW OF A FILM TO secrecy is hard. But when it's a massive movie like *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald,* with some 700 people and 1,000 costumes—including 400 coats alone—it's next to impossible. All precautions are taken: characters are given code names, minute details are protected by nondisclosure agreements, and digital scripts are encrypted and disappear after a certain amount of time. It's not quite magic, but it's close.

The pressure to not reveal anything—even by accident—is enough to give Eddie Redmayne heart palpitations. "I've been sent this hilarious document which is covered with double-caps, triple-underlined notes saying, YOU CAN'T TALK ABOUT THIS," says the Oscar winner, who returns as wizard Newt Scamander in the sequel, out Nov. 16. We're sitting in his spotless trailer at Warner Bros. Studio in Hertfordshire, just north of London, around three months into production. Does he ever tell anyone? He leans in and admits, a little bashfully, that he does: his wife, Hannah Bagshawe.

It certainly helps that J.K. Rowling is the master of keeping secrets. She famously claims to have known crucial plot points from her best-selling book series' endgame years in advance. And Johnny Depp's controversial casting—the actor has been accused of domestic violence by his ex-wife Amber Heard—as the dark wizard Grindelwald was kept under wraps until just two weeks before the first film came out in 2016.

Bearing this commitment to secrecy in mind, it's no surprise that Rowling has entrusted very few with details about how the remaining three movies in the proposed five-part series will play out. Even producer Tim Lewis, who has worked on eight *Harry Potter* installments, is in the dark. "We haven't seen scripts for the next one," he says. "I am assuming [Rowling] knows the whole plan—but I couldn't say."

The stakes are high enough: the first *Fantastic Beasts* movie raked in $814 million. That's a number most studios would dream about, but when it comes to Harry Potter, expectations start sky-high. In a world filled with universes based on existing intellectual property—*Star Wars,* Marvel—franchise fatigue is always possible. But for now, the mania shows no sign of letting up: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child,* a play based on an idea by Rowling, is a critical and commercial smash. For the *Beasts* sequel, analysts are already predicting an opening weekend of $65 million to $75 million.

ON THE ENORMOUS *BEASTS* SET, designed to look like 1920s Paris, everything is perfectly in order. I stroll down a full high street lined with shops, including a magical pharmacy called Elixir, a wand store and a butcher with slabs of "meat" hanging from the ceiling. Even the tablecloths and plates in a charming bistro are artfully dirty.

That's not quite the case in the less-than-spotless trailer of Ezra Miller, who plays the mysterious orphan Credence Barebone. Plates of half-eaten food sit on most surfaces. His character—a wizard with a parasitical magical force—requires interacting with sophisticated motion-sensor technology to cultivate a physical language. "[Whatever I'm doing] I'm going to fall into an imagination rabbit hole and be wherever the script says I am," says Miller. "I am constantly repeating the playtime process of falling into pocket-size dimensions and staying there for a while, and then at some point hopefully popping out." Playing a dark force comes easily to Miller, whose troubled character's search for his identity is central to the new movie's closely guarded plot.

For Miller, who grew up reading the books, working with Rowling is the realization of a childhood fantasy. "She is such a seminal writer," he says. "This is one of the projects where I would never even think to improvise or abbreviate a line." When the film opens, legions of Potter fans will join Miller to have their magical universes widened once more. But for now, the mysteries of the film belong only to the people making it. □

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BOOKS

A loaded letter from a long-lost mom

By Naina Bajekal

PARTWAY THROUGH ANURADHA ROY'S *All the Lives We Never Lived,* the German artist Walter Spies makes the case for simply enjoying life in India amid the global upheaval of the 1930s. "We are oceans away from all that," he says. Another character disagrees: "The world is round and oceans meet. No place is safe from evil."

Roy interlaces the local and the global in her new novel, which opens as Myshkin, a horticulturalist in his mid-60s, receives a letter "pulsating with the energy of every unopened letter in the world." As Myshkin reflects on his childhood in the fictional

Roy lives in Ranikhet, a remote hill town in the Himalayas

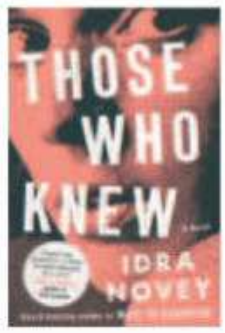
Himalayan village of Muntazir (which translates to "the one who is waiting impatiently"), readers join him on a quest to find out why his mother Gayatri left him when he was 9 years old. Roy's intensely visual prose carries the narrative as it flits from 1917 to the 1930s and 1990s. Freed from the demands of historical authenticity, she brings together real-life figures—including Spies, English ballet dancer Beryl de Zoete and the poet Rabindranath Tagore—with her fictional ones to create a luminous world.

All the Lives We Never Lived is Roy's fourth novel, coming a decade after her first, *An Atlas of Impossible Longing,* which was translated into 18 languages. Her third, *Sleeping on Jupiter,* a tale of three elderly women on a pilgrimage to a temple, made the Man Booker Prize long list in 2015.

In this new book, Roy is grappling with bigger themes—freedom, nationalism and nature—against the turbulent backdrop of India's fight for independence and World War II. Her mastery of detail ties an intimate domestic drama to national history, offering a portrait of one family's troubles with desire and loss that speaks to the more universal struggles for personal and political freedom.

Roy skillfully navigates the gender politics enmeshed in India's battle for self-determination, writing with great compassion for Gayatri, who had "fallen as low as a woman could" by leaving behind her husband, child and home. The character laments her duty to stay at home instead of pursuing her own dreams: "What good will the nation's freedom do for me? Tell me that! Will it make me free?" With her characteristically light touch, Roy shows how the world applauds men's political acts and overlooks their domestic behavior, a luxury rarely afforded to women who chase their own desires. Roy's focus is imperfect—at one point she veers into a marginal tale of the real-life Bengali poet Maitreyi Devi, whose life somewhat mirrors Gayatri's—but her prose is always captivating.

As told by Myshkin, the book thrums with the anxiety of waiting. The reader is propelled through the pages, impatient to find out what happened to the grown man's mother, to discover what her letters contain. Roy's skillful blending—of fact and fiction, of personal and political, and of suspense and reward—creates a rich and layered read. But the modern resonances of rising nationalism, in India and beyond, ensure that Roy's story of what happened in Muntazir transcends its own pages. "Once the letter was read," Myshkin says, "it would be over and I would have to start waiting again." It's a feeling readers may well share. ◻



BOOKS

What's behind closed doors

Accepting the bad behavior of our enemies is easy, but it can be harder to hold our allies accountable. That's the tension at the heart of author and poet Idra Novey's new book, *Those Who Knew,* following her 2016 debut novel, *Ways to Disappear.* The story takes place in an unnamed city after the fall of an oppressive regime. Lena, a university instructor, is forced to revisit a violent memory with a former revolutionary leader—an ex-boyfriend who has since become a powerful progressive politician. When the man, a champion of causes Lena deeply supports, is implicated in the murder of a young woman, Lena must decide whether to come forward to accuse him—or keep quiet to protect their shared values.

Novey, who wrote the novel before the #MeToo movement swept the country, has crafted a fitting parable for the way many among us have been forced to grapple with revelations that the people we respect and admire might be guilty of ugly acts. Written in sharp prose, *Those Who Knew* keys into a prime lesson from our cultural reckoning with exploitation and abuse: that people's outward character can be worlds apart from how they conduct themselves behind closed doors. Relevant and engrossing, this is a page-turning drama that tackles an essential moral dilemma.

—Wilder Davies

ROY: GETTY IMAGES; AT ETERNITY'S GATE: CBS; THE BALLAD OF BUSTER SCRUGGS: NETFLIX

Dafoe as van Gogh: a dream portrait made whole by its star

MOVIES

The van Gogh we never knew

By Stephanie Zacharek

THERE ARE THINGS WE KNOW FOR sure about Vincent van Gogh: that he suffered from mental-health issues, that he cut off his left ear in 1888, that in some form or another his paintings—reproduced on coffee mugs, museum-shop scarves and laptop sleeves—bring many people at least moderate joy every day.

At Eternity's Gate, Julian Schnabel's delightful, mournful film about van Gogh's last years, spent in Arles, St.-Rémy and Auvers-sur-Oise, is far from a straight-on biopic. Instead, Schnabel riffs on what we know and speculates about much we don't, imagining what it was like to see through van Gogh's eyes and to live in his skin. We see the artist sketching a stand of trees whose leaves look like little spears. But in his drawing, they're curlicues—wholly inaccurate, according to our eyes, and yet making more visual and emotional sense than the real thing.

> ***'This is not the official history—it's my version. One that I hope could make you closer to him.'***
>
> **JULIAN SCHNABEL,** on his vision of Vincent van Gogh

Schnabel's dream portrait of van Gogh is made whole by its star, Willem Dafoe, whose radiant intensity fills every corner of the film. Artists often come off as pretentious, making noisy pronouncements about their art or that of others. The van Gogh of *At Eternity's Gate* is fond of making grand little speeches, sometimes to friends—like his close associate Paul Gauguin, played with soulful élan by Oscar Isaac—and sometimes, in voice-over, to himself: "I'd like to find a new light. For paintings that we haven't yet seen. Bright pictures, painted in sunlight."

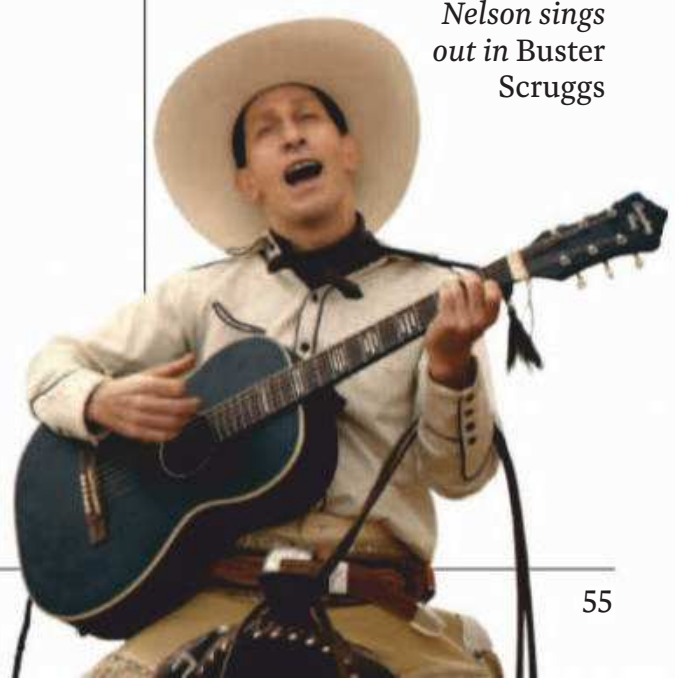
It sounds pretentious until you remember that van Gogh actually did it, and some of Schnabel and cinematographer Benoît Delhomme's shots, framed as modified re-creations of van Gogh's pictures, bring that truth home. All those sunflower yellows and twilight blues translate very nicely to our coffee mugs. But Schnabel reminds us that they were, in fact, the very colors of one man's life. ☐

MOVIES

Laughin' and cryin' with the Coens

SOME DAYS A CHEERFUL outlook just won't do. For those days, there's Joel and Ethan Coen's *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs,* an omnibus of cowboy stories arriving Nov. 16 on Netflix. Though you'll catch dashes of the Coens' trademark arch humor, most of *Buster Scruggs* isn't what you'd call a laugh riot. It starts out at a brisk canter and ends with a stagecoach headed, literally, for death's door.

In the movie's ridiculously enjoyable opener, Tim Blake Nelson appears as the balladeer of the title, a murderous outlaw with a spring in his step. The darkest tale, "The Gal Who Got Rattled," features Zoe Kazan as a reserved young woman heading across the prairie with a wagon train. The story ends happily for no one, not least the white settlers who think nothing of seizing land that has belonged to others for centuries. This, the Coens seem to be saying to America, is how we became the people we are. We stole a whole country. Now we have to live with it. —S.Z.



Nelson sings out in Buster Scruggs

REVIEW

Coming of age, Italian style

By Judy Berman

THE CENTERPIECE OF *MY BRILLIANT FRIEND,* the first of pseudonymous Italian author Elena Ferrante's four beloved Neapolitan novels, is a New Year's Eve fireworks display. Narrator Elena "Lenù" Greco and her best friend, Raffaella "Lila" Cerullo, are teens ringing in 1959 at a gathering that has reunited feuding clans in a show of neighborhood solidarity. But a rare moment of wonder in this slum at the edge of Naples devolves into a battle with the local mob family. Lila describes the panic attack that overtakes her that night as an experience of "dissolving margins," an implosion of her moral universe. Elation gives way to angst as pyrotechnics overload the characters' senses, culminating in a symbolic end to Lila's childhood.

Translating a scene this layered into a visual medium couldn't have been easy for the makers of *My Brilliant Friend,* the first of four planned miniseries based on Ferrante's novels, which premieres Nov. 18 on HBO. Yet the scene retains its power onscreen. At first, director Saverio Costanzo keeps a tight focus on the terrace where Lila and Lenù enjoy the fireworks. Then the frame widens and the mobsters come into view. Lila turns sweaty and grim. Lenù watches, helpless. Faces blur into one another. Indeed, margins dissolve.

Costanzo and the show's impressive executive producers, Italian filmmaker Paolo Sorrentino *(The Young Pope)* and *Hannibal* alum Jennifer Schuur, seem to get that the scene is the linchpin of the book. And their fidelity to Ferrante's vision is matched by their commitment to verisimilitude. In this co-production with Italian public television that was filmed in the Neapolitan dialect, the miniseries' young actors—cast in an open call—don't perform their roles so much as inhabit them. Narration highlights Ferrante's keenest observations. But it is Costanzo's light hand with Ferrante's story and motifs that makes this a thrilling adaptation.

Born in the wake of World War II and Italian fascism, in a neighborhood that feels more like a remote island than the satellite of a major city, Lenù (played by Elisa del Genio as a child and Margherita Mazzucco as a teen) and Lila (Ludovica Nasti, then Gaia Girace) meet in first grade. They are opposites: Lenù is a tall, fair "good girl," while Lila is tiny and dark, with a feral intensity. They're both smart, but Lila is a self-taught prodigy, and their competition pushes Lenù to excel. Their relationship grows strained when Lenù graduates to middle school but Lila is forced to go to work.

Casting for My Brilliant Friend *took place over eight months, with almost 9,000 children (Nasti, left, and del Genio, right) from southern Italy auditioning*

The girls' perspectives are initially constrained by their block—where women gossip at the windows, men fight in the streets and there are no secrets. In the premiere, Costanzo confines his palate to desaturated earth tones, giving scenes the same grit as Italy's postwar neorealist films. Color creeps in as Lenù ventures ever farther from home while Lila develops an increasingly sophisticated worldview from within her family's apartment. As in the fireworks scene, the introduction of vibrant shades doesn't always signify positive change.

MY BRILLIANT FRIEND may be the most visible subtitled show ever to air in the U.S.—and though it comes with a built-in audience, it still feels like a risk. While male coming-of-age stories are presumed to be universal, teenage girls are usually treated as a niche concern. In the case of Ferrante, that double standard seems especially unfair.

Greeted in the U.S. as European cousins to tales of female friendship like *Girls* and *Broad City,* the novels aren't as gendered as their pastel covers suggest. Though their fates are shaped by a sexist culture, Lila and Lenù are individuals first. *My Brilliant Friend* resonates most as a record of the way a person's world expands between childhood and adolescence. Amid a pop-culture landscape newly obsessed with the experience of the oppressed class that makes up half of the population, this is a rare story that sees its young women for who they are: human beings. ◻

MY BRILLIANT FRIEND: HBO; THE KOMINSKY METHOD: NETFLIX; THE LITTLE DRUMMER GIRL: AMC; SKARSGARD: GETTY IMAGES

REVIEW

Chuck Lorre's prestige bet

The Big Bang Theory co-creator Chuck Lorre has a very successful brand: old-school multicam sitcoms built around broad characters, laugh tracks and comfy couches. So it's surprising to see him aim for a more highbrow style with his new Netflix series, *The Kominsky Method.*

The show takes pains to appear sophisticated: it's a serialized single-camera dramedy led by A-listers Michael Douglas and Alan Arkin. Douglas plays Sandy Kominsky, an esteemed acting teacher with an earnest reverence for his craft, three ex-wives and no roles on the horizon. His responsibilities change when his friend Eileen (Susan Sullivan), who is dying of cancer, begs Sandy to take care of her cantankerous husband, agent Norman Newlander (Arkin).

This setup is rich with potential for dark comedy, but Lorre squanders it on stock supporting characters and obvious jokes. Millennials are coddled. Gay men lisp. Women exist solely to tolerate or torment men. (Norman's daughter Phoebe, played by Lisa Edelstein, is an especially nasty caricature of a spoiled addict.) The leads make each man's plight poignant, but solid performances can't compensate for the lazy writing. Even with prestige trappings, it just feels cheap. —*J.B.*

Even the lovable Arkin can't save this show

Charlie (Pugh) gets more than she bargained for in a holiday fling

REVIEW

The Little Drummer Girl finds its beating heart

"TERRORISM IS THEATER," WROTE Brian Jenkins, an expert on the topic, in 1974. John le Carré's novel *The Little Drummer Girl* takes this famous—and, in 21st century America, self-evident—observation to its logical extreme, following an actor recruited to infiltrate a terrorist cell that is planning its next lethal show.

In AMC's adaptation of the book, a co-production with the BBC that will air on three consecutive nights starting Nov. 19, the year is 1979 and the actor is a young Londoner named Charlie (Florence Pugh). Despite her bewitching performances, she's still awaiting her big break when she meets a mystery man (Alexander Skarsgard's Becker) in Greece. He whisks her away, supposedly for a private getaway but really to recruit her for a renegade squad of Israeli spies scheming to take down a Palestinian terrorist leader. The group's obsessive boss, Kurtz (Michael Shannon), fancies himself a director in the "theater of the real," and he's cast Charlie as his leading lady. She has a history of pro-Palestine politics, but the team is betting that her sympathies will only lend authenticity to her charade.

GOOD VILLAIN
Skarsgard won an Emmy for his performance as the abusive Perry Wright in *Big Little Lies.*

As in all le Carré stories, there's a lot more going on here—enough to mire the first third of *The Little Drummer Girl* in exposition without providing much insight into the characters. Only after Charlie's mission begins does thriller master Park Chan-wook *(Oldboy),* who directed the miniseries, pick up the pace.

But later episodes are worth the wait. Suspense builds against a backdrop of '70s interiors so bright, they're sinister. Charlie's moral dilemma, fraught by her feelings for Becker, speaks volumes about British interference in the Middle East. There are nuanced characters on both sides. Yet it's Pugh—an actor playing an actor improvising her way through the role of a lifetime—who makes the show work. By capturing Charlie's ambivalence, she creates a truly unpredictable heroine. —J.B.

PROFILE

The new white knight of American chess

By Sean Gregory

FABIANO CARUANA DID NOT START PLAYING CHESS WHEN he was 5 years old because his mom thought that he'd be a grand master—or that he'd play for the World Chess Championship, just as fellow Brooklynite Bobby Fischer did in the 1970s. No, his mom just thought chess would calm him down.

"I was having trouble with concentration," says Caruana, 26. "It was more of a remedy." Within a year, though, he was winning games against kids in junior high school and older. "His first instructor told us he was trying to teach her chess concepts," says his father Lou. "We knew he was special."

Beginning on Nov. 9 in London, Caruana will become the first American to challenge for the World Chess Championship since Fischer won it in 1972. He faces Norway's Magnus Carlsen, the title holder since 2013, in the three-week, 12-game match. Chess pundits expect that a Caruana victory could spark an explosion in interest that the U.S. hasn't seen since Fischer's heyday.

"Fabiano has the power to be better than Carlsen," says Mark Crowther, founding editor of *The Week in Chess*. "There have been very, very few players you can say that about."

CARUANA FORGED A CIRCUITOUS PATH to representing the U.S. on chess's grandest stage. When he was 12, his family took him out of school and moved to Spain, so he could play in more high-level tournaments and train with top instructors. Since his mother is Italian, he could compete for Italy's chess federation.

Initially, Caruana didn't support the plan. "I had friends in Brooklyn. I had a life in Brooklyn," he says. But soon it became normal. "I missed out on social things, but I was able to see the world as a young kid, which is very rare."

7
Number of Americans in the top 100 of the world chess rankings

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250%
Increase in minutes of chess watched, over the past year, on the online streaming platform Twitch

Caruana, chess's second-ranked player, will be the first American to compete for the world championship in over four decades

SEBASTIAN REUTER—GETTY IMAGES

Lou, a former data-processing consultant who also earned income from real estate holdings, says he spent up to $100,000 on chess travel and instruction for his son in those early years in Europe. The investment paid off. At 14, Fabiano became the youngest chess grand master, at the time, in both Italian and American history. Caruana confesses that the early success swelled his head. "You don't think you need the work, which is always a mistake," he says. "I would take excessive risks and do crazy things to win a game." Sometimes it cost him.

But Caruana overcame his growing pains and started earning a living playing chess. In 2014 he beat Carlsen and other elite players to win the Sinquefield Cup. The tournament is named after Rex Sinquefield, who pioneered index stock funds in the 1970s—and has invested north of $50 million over the past decade to building one of the world's premier chess clubs in St. Louis. In 2015, Caruana moved back to America and switched federations from Italy to the U.S. He now lives in St. Louis. "For a chess player," Caruana says, "it's the best place to be."

TO PREPARE for the world championship, Caruana spent some time this summer training at Sinquefield's country home in Missouri—including jogging, shooting hoops and playing tennis to keep in peak physical shape. "Chess requires a lot of stamina," says Caruana. "You're playing six, seven hours at a time. You're burning a lot of calories, and you can easily get mentally tired. If your physical form is not good, then you're likely to crash at some point."

In recent weeks, Caruana has trained in Spain, where he's done yoga and swum in the Mediterranean to clear his head. He has played for up to eight hours a day. "The goal is to get you thinking about chess 24/7," he says. "It's playing quick games, slow games, anything that will get you in that mode where you calculate very quickly. Your mind is working in the best possible shape."

Caruana likens chess to boxing or MMA fighting and expects that people will see similarities in his championship bout with Carlsen. "It will be a fight that is blow for blow," he says, "with each of us trying to get the upper hand, trying to impose our will on the other guy." ◻

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8 Questions

Diego Luna The actor and humanitarian takes on a violent chapter of his home country's history as a notorious drug lord in *Narcos: Mexico*

Why is now the right time to tell the story of how Mexico's drug war started? There's an urgency to stop this violence in my country. It's impossible to understand how things got this bad if we don't look back. This particular time [in the mid-1980s] defines a lot of the relationship between Mexico and the U.S. and is important to understanding what has been done on both sides of the border to get to this mess.

The story centers on the 1985 murder of DEA agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, which took place when you were 5 years old. Do you have any memory of seeing it in the news? It's been interesting to do this project because I've had to go back and remember this time from the perspective of an adult. I learned more about it in the mid-'90s when I was in school and I cared about politics. I was finally waking up.

The show suggests that people wanted to pretend the drug war wasn't happening, despite rampant killings. Is that still true? No. Today, the problem is that things have become much more complicated. These characters built a perfect structure that involved every level of power in this country and on the other side of the border. When that structure fell apart, violence got out of control. Now the military is in the streets doing internal security, and that's very dangerous. It's clearly a crisis. We've been living in a war zone in Mexico.

President Donald Trump's response to the migrant caravan is dominating headlines. How is the Mexican government handling the situation? Really poorly. But this is not new—Mexico deports more Central Americans than the States. There are so many humanitarian efforts to help migrants, but as a country, we're far from taking care of them. We're the most dangerous part of their travel to the border. And yet we are urging the States to take care of them. Mexico pretends to be a country that cares about the poor. But it's just show.

'MEXICO PRETENDS TO BE A COUNTRY THAT CARES ABOUT THE POOR. BUT IT'S JUST SHOW'

You've been an outspoken critic of outgoing President Enrique Peña Nieto. Do you have any hopes for President-elect Andrés Manuel López Obrador, a leftist? A long time ago, I lost hope for the people who work from inside the government. My only hope is in citizens of this country being loud and speaking out. That is something I do celebrate from the past election. I'm not necessarily saying I celebrate the next President, but it's an impressive turnout and a big majority saying, "We need to change."

You've been courted to run for office but declined. Why? I love what I do. I love telling stories. I believe it's a really powerful tool. Cinema has changed my perspective on things that I believe make me a better and richer person, and I still have a lot to explore and to say.

Mexican directors have won four of the past five Best Director Oscars. Is this a new golden age of Mexican cinema? Of Mexican voices. We've got to be careful saying it's a golden age of Mexican cinema. I go to cinemas in Mexico, and it's tough to find Mexican films there. The problem with our industry is that it's a reflection of the country we're living in. What has happened is that the voices are very sharp and eager to talk. That's why you see so many Mexican directors doing great films around the world.

You're in Barry Jenkins' new film, *If Beale Street Could Talk*, adapted from James Baldwin's 1974 novel about a wrongly convicted black man. Why did this story resonate with you? The story is so relevant today. The day before I saw it in New York, I saw a documentary in Mexico about someone who was in jail because of the wrong reasons, and it felt so connected. *If Beale Street Could Talk* was based on a book written decades ago. But we don't seem to understand. We still don't seem to get it.

—SAMANTHA COONEY

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